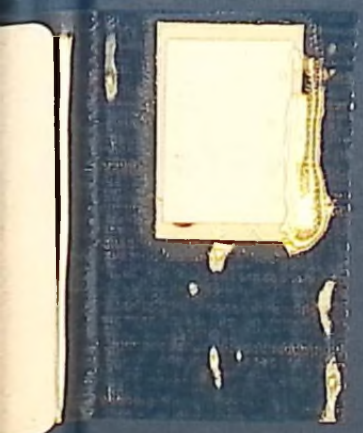
A MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH HOLMAN SPENCE

THOMAS HUGH SPENCE, JR.



A MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH HOLMAN SPENCE

Elizabeth Holman Spence

From a Portrait by
Linda Hunter Duffy

A
MEMOIR
OF

ELIZABETH HOLMAN SPENCE

By
Thomas Hugh Spence, Jr.

For Private Distribution
Montreat, North Carolina
1978

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Preface

The purpose of this volume is self-evident. My daughter, Maria Spence Thomas, served as capable counselor throughout its preparation. Margaret Holman McCoy was of major assistance in supplying materials for its content, particularly with reference to Chapter I. Mary Goodman Lane and Lannae Graham have made substantial contributions toward the completion of the undertaking. I am deeply grateful to each of the four for their effective and esteemed services.

Montreat, North Carolina
November 10, 1977

Thomas Hugh Spence, Jr.

gift of the author 3.27.78

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WHEN AUTUMN MARKS HER WAY ACROSS VIRGINIA

When autumn marks her way across Virginia,
With myriad mountain sides transformed to gold
By that Almighty Hand which through the ages
The seasons in their wonted path hath rolled,

My heart cries out from far and distant places,
When days are chill and nights do follow clear,
That I might wander o'er those slopes resplendent
When autumn in Virginia marks the year.

Or, when on lower reaches, flaming gum trees
And maples crimson 'neath their Maker's touch
Stand out among their neighbors still in verdure,
My heart longs for Virginia over much.

So some day when the autumn clothes Virginia
In garments fair as man has learned to know,
I'll turn my face unto that Old Dominion,
And, thus rejoicing, homeward I shall go.

From the Author's *Westward across Nebraska*, 1939.

CHAPTER I

Locust Bend: Home of the Holmans

Locust Bend stood on one of Goochland County's rolling hills which rise at a respectful distance from the lordly James, as that fated river makes its unhurried way toward the waiting sea. At one point the stream flows in a gracefully sweeping loop, encompassing the Holman lands, which, in conjunction with the locust trees growing near the site of the house itself, gave rise to the name of Locust Bend.

"We spend," wrote the sacred chronicler of a distant past, "our years as a tale that is told." It was so with Locust Bend; and the pages immediately following represent an endeavor to tell, at least in outline form, the engaging story of its fifty gracious years.

William Miller Holman, son of James Miller and Martha Louise Gathright Holman, was born at Loch Lomond, the home of his grandmother, Goochland County, Virginia, on July 16, 1860. He was an alumnus of one of history's most austere schools, the period of Reconstruction in the South following 1865. Despite the deprivations of that distraught era, he managed to attend the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, from which he was graduated in 1890. He then entered upon an internship in that same city.

He remembered, as a boy, making trips to Richmond and return on the packet boats that plied the James River and Kanawha Canal which still wound along his land in later years, though then long disused and bereft of water for decades. The rails of the James River Line of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway had been laid, in many instances, on what was once the

tow path of that artificial waterway. Extant schedules indicate that the twenty-five mile journey from the locality of Locust Bend to Richmond was an overnight trip, for the boats ran both night and day. Horses pulled the passenger boats while those handling freight depended upon mules for locomotion. But all of this was long before the days of Locust Bend.

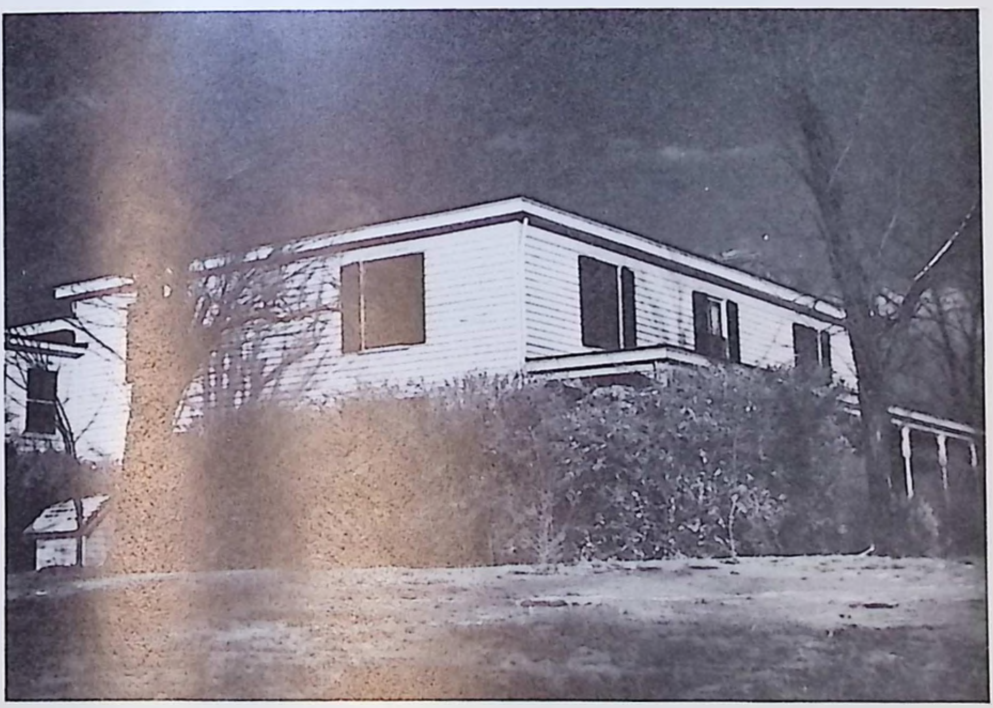
Several years after the death of his first wife on July 30, 1874, James Miller Holman married Ellen Guy of Contention Farm, situated near Lee, Virginia. Following this wedding on November 27, 1878, the couple settled at Contention. On February 19, 1894, William Miller Holman purchased at auction a tract of 186 acres of the Contention holdings in order to be near his father, who died five years later on January 13, 1899. Dr. Holman later made occasional additions to this acquisition until his farm embraced more than four hundred acres.

Dr. Holman married Petrella Guerrant Massie on December 15, 1892. They lived for a time in the "Smith House," about one mile from the home which he was soon to build on his newly acquired property. Within several years this was destroyed by fire and replaced with a second dwelling which later came to be known as Locust Bend. His only son, James Guerrant Holman, was born on January 12, 1894; and Mrs. Holman died on September 1st of the following year.

On June 16, 1898, Dr. Holman married Maria Breece Evans of nearby Powhatan County, the wedding taking place in St. Luke's Episcopal Church. The bride, daughter of Maurice and Anne Elizabeth Linton Evans, was born in Richmond on October 10, 1874. Her father, originally a Richmond merchant, had moved to the country on account of the health of his wife, finally settling at Subletts in Powhatan.

The practice of his profession led Dr. Holman across all the highways and byways of the region around his home. During the earlier period of work he travelled by buggy, a light vehicle

Dr. and Mrs. William Miller Holman



Locust Bend

called a jumper, or on horseback. Of these years it may prove profitable to turn to an account of his travels as it appeared in a local newspaper soon after his death:

> Often before the day of cars, roads were too bad for travel with his horse and buggy, but he thought nothing of braving rain, sleet and snow on horseback, to see an ill patient.
>
> Then, there were times when a horse could not be trusted on the ice, he would don his heavy boots and walk for miles to attend an ill neighbor and friend.

Or an even more intimate record from a letter written by his wife to her sister-in-law, Mrs. A. R. Green, of Richmond, on July 17, 1899:

> Dr. H. has been away since six this morning & will not be home before dark. Yesterday he spent all day at home, only making one visit. You know how much I enjoyed having him with me for it is so seldom that he is ever here except for his meals.

With the coming of the automobile, he adopted that mode of travel so far as it was practical, but never mastered the intricacies of the motor car. Those near him have said that when such a vehicle stopped on the road, he pulled out everything that could be pulled out; pushed in everything that could be pushed in; and if the car still proved recalcitrant, simply left it and proceeded on his way.

For more than fifty years he visited patients in their homes and treated those less incapacitated who came to his office which he maintained at his residence. Mrs. Holman was his capable assistant in much of this phase of his work. On one occasion, after two inimical factions had taken recourse to their knives, or razors, by way of resolving certain differences which had arisen between them, and had brought their respective casualties to Locust Bend for his attention, Dr. Holman ministered to one

of the victims in his office, surrounded by this patient's partisans, while he treated the other, likewise encircled by friends, on the porch of his home.

His practice was not confined to Goochland County. At the railway station of Lee was a ferry boat of sufficient tonnage to carry a horse and buggy or, in later times, an automobile. This provided him with a convenient means of crossing over the James River into Powhatan County, a means which he utilized, not only in the pursuit of his work, but in the wooing of Maria Evans.

Each Saturday for a number of years he boarded the morning train for Richmond at Lee in order to purchase his supply of medicine for the following week. In those days few drug stores were within practical reach of residents of rural areas, and the country doctors customarily carried drugs for their patients as they made their rounds. Dr. Holman always returned from the city, not only with his medical supplies, but also bearing a box of Kemp's candy for Mrs. Holman, a basket of cookies for the younger members of the family, and a very large roast of beef for everyone.

During the earlier period of his practice he frequently turned to hunting by way of diversion. There were always quail on his farm, and he was careful to have a hunting dog available during these years. Game continued to frequent the lands of Locust Bend. Deer have been seen within a relatively short distance of the homestead as late as the 1930's.

Martha Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Maria Evans Holman, was born at Locust Bend on June 9, 1899. A memento of her birth survives in the form of a postal card, addressed to Mrs. A. R. Green, and signed "E. B. Evans." It reads as follows: "Masie asked me to write and tell you she has a little daughter. Both doing very well." The card was dated June 10, and mailed from Subletts, Virginia.

At this time the tragedy of Gettysburg was only a generation

behind and a new century was all but in the offing. Democrats were Democrats and Republicans were Republicans, rather than the conglomerate aggregations into which they were later to become. A genuine Republican, William McKinley, was president, soon to be succeeded by one of the most colorful of all the occupants of the White House. The Spanish-American War had ended and the next conflict in which the nation was to become engaged was, though entirely unsuspected by its citizens, only eighteen years in the future.

Martha Elizabeth—the Martha fell into disuse with the passage of time—was the oldest of the nine girls born to Dr. and Mrs. Holman. On account of this seniority, one of the Holman governesses prevailed upon the younger members of the family to address her as "Sister." Furthermore, they accorded her all, or almost all, of the prerogatives and privileges incidental to her position.

Like a Lystran youth of the founding years of the Christian Church, she came into a home where her training in the things of the Spirit was assumed as a matter of course, as well as being regarded as of overpowering importance. Several weeks after her birth, her mother wrote to a relative:

> When I look at our sweet little darling I think what a precious blessing she is. May we be given wisdom to guide her little feet in the right path.

The next seven decades were to demonstrate that this prayer was to be answered in all the fulness for which the petitioner might have hoped when she gave expression to such desires for her child on that July day of 1899.

For a year the Holmans of school age attended a sort of community school conducted on the nearby plantation of Little Dover, generally reaching the small building set aside or such purposes by a path leading through the intervening fields and woods. James, Elizabeth, Mary, and Maria constituted the group

thus involved. Dr. Holman is said to have occasionally taken Maria, the youngest of the four attendants, on his horse in order to spare her the walk of some distance to the seat of instruction.

In keeping with a Virginia tradition of long standing—actually of several centuries—the older Holman children were, for the most part, taught at home by a governess. The duties of this preceptress must have been both varied and manifold, including the teaching of music as well as the standard subjects taught in the public schools of those days.

The three older girls entered Cardwell High School, five miles from their home, for their senior year of work. The conveyance provided by the authorities for transportation consisted of a wagon pulled by one horse and one mule. The Holmans at times preferred to walk to Cardwell rather than relying upon this mode of travel. In any event, the school awarded its diploma to each of them on June 5, 1917, in recognition of their having, in the phraseology of that and many other such documents, "completed the course of study prescribed."

Locust Bend was one mile from Lee, the railway station on the branch of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway which runs from Richmond to Clifton Forge, Virginia. Lee consisted of the station building and several dwellings, but did not boast a store of any kind. In the opposite direction from the Holman home, north, was what is now Virginia Highway Number 6. The intervening mile included one of the sharpest of conceivable curves. The Highway led to the village of Crozier after another half mile. Twenty-five miles further on in the same direction was Richmond, the commercial, ecclesiastical, educational, cultural, and political center of the surrounding region.

The Holman homestead was in itself a community in miniature, made up of the family and servants. It was in no sense isolated because of what it was and of what transpired on its hill top. A youthful Holman would no more consider herself remote from the center of activity than would a Bostonian.

Hebron Presbyterian Church was the family place of worship. It was five miles away, and this necessitated recourse to some means of conveyance on the part of those who attended its services—buggies and carriages in the early days and automobiles in the later ones. Dr. Holman was a ruling elder in Hebron and James served as a member of the diaconate, and later as an elder. Mrs. Holman was active in the various phases of its work, especially that of the women, as well as in the Sunday School, frequently acting as organist during its period of worship.

Elizabeth grew up under the spiritual nurture of Hebron and its minister and ministry. Its session received her into the full communion of the church on profession of her faith in Christ as her Saviour. On July 1, 1917, she was the recipient of a Bible for having perfectly recited the Westminster Shorter Catechism, an accomplishment never attained by her minister-husband. Her church membership remained at Hebron until October 2, 1927, when the session dismissed her to the Banner Elk Presbyterian Church, following her marriage. It was at Hebron that she worshipped until leaving home, and here she attended services on many occasions upon her return. Here she was married, and to Hebron she brought her children when they were so fortunate as to be at Locust Bend on the Lord's Day.

Several of the Holmans each chose an individual project which they judged would bring a profitable monetary return to them. Elizabeth centered her attention upon the raising of turkeys and had accumulated a considerable sum from their sale by the time she left Locust Bend to enter college.

In the fall following their graduation from Cardwell, that of 1917, Elizabeth, Mary, and Maria enrolled in the State Teacher's College (now Mary Washington) at Fredericksburg Virginia. Here their uncle, William Hamlet, was a member of the faculty. Elizabeth moved along in a satisfactory manner with her work save for that in a required course in public school music which involved singing, an area in which neither her talents nor pro-

ficiency were outstanding. Finally, the college authorities exempted her from this requirement, since she had no plans to enter the teaching field.

This was her first experience in living away from home, but the presence of her two sisters, augmented by that of Professor and Mrs. Hamlet, lent to the time spent in Fredericksburg an atmosphere with a distinct resemblance to that of Locust Bend.

After two academic years at Fredericksburg, she began the course specially designed by way of preparation for her projected life work, by entering the School of Nursing of Stuart Circle Hospital in Richmond. This was much closer to home than Fredericksburg, and brought her into more frequent contact with her family at Locust Bend, despite the consistent demands of the training upon which she had entered. Living in the home provided for the students of the Training School, she was in close proximity to the hospital itself. One of the great days of her life came on March 23, 1923 as she graduated and, having passed the examination prescribed by the State of Virginia, went out to practice her chosen profession. Among her most cherished possessions was an Elgin watch given to her by her parents upon her graduation.

Thereupon she engaged in private duty in the City of Richmond. Elizabeth and her sisters, Maria and Evelyn, lived in an apartment on Grace Street with Miss Peachy Wilson as chaperon. One of the purchases made by this group was a record player, bought on what was then known as the installment plan, with a decidedly limited number of records. The Richmond venture came to an end in the summer of 1924 when she moved to Banner Elk, North Carolina—a story which must be reserved for the forthcoming pages of this narrative.

The writer first visited Locust Bend in June of 1925, coming not entirely as an outsider, since Elizabeth and I had become engaged to be married in April of that year. Mine is the rare privilege of recording the story of Locust Bend and those whose

Elizabeth and Mary Holman

School Girl

Graduation, Stuart Circle Hospital Training School, 1923
Elizabeth Stands at Extreme Right

home was there. No claim is put forth for the possession of special gifts for such an undertaking but only the plea that I was the first from without to gain admittance into the inner circle of that household.

Soon after reaching Locust Bend, I discovered that two of the available pastimes at the Holman's were those of boating and fishing in the James River. Some years later, very small Maria Spence appeared at the house with a very large catfish in evidence of her piscatorial prowess as exercised in that stream.

Facilities for tennis were among the offerings of Locust Bend to those inclined toward that type of sport or, as was frequently the case, who welcomed an opportunity for engaging in what was really a semi-social function centering around the court. The grounds also afforded excellent layouts for croquet by way of catering to the tastes of players preferring a game requiring less physical exertion than that demanded by tennis.

On the evening of June 16, 1926, Elizabeth went out from Locust Bend to Hebron Church where she and I were married in a ceremony at which my father, Thomas H. Spence, Sr., officiated. The bride's father; her sisters, Mary and Maria; Nannie Wight; my sister, Estelle Spence Hudson; Bob Liston; my brother, Chenault; and Elizabeth's brother, James, were additional members of the wedding party. Margaret Holman and Pocahontas Wight provided the wedding music. This was the first of a series of weddings with which the Holman family was to be intimately concerned.

We left for a honeymoon at Montreat by way of Salisbury, North Carolina, and Rocky River. When we drove into the grounds of the Presbyterian Conference Center, just west of the Eastern Continental Divide, the bride little suspected the place Montreat was to play in her future life—that thirteen years later it would become her home for well above a third of a century. We visited Mount Mitchell, having lunch at Camp Alice, and made a trip to Chimney Rock, as well as excursions to Ashe-

ville. It was then on to Banner Elk where the reader will find us in the next chapter.

Christmas was always a capital occasion at Locust Bend. After the girls had gone out to make homes of their own, they esteemed it a privilege of the first order to return for this holiday season to the setting which had meant so much to them in the waning days of consecutive Decembers. Potential Christmas trees were plentiful within the wooded areas of the plantation, and happy was that one who was permitted to join the group charged with the procuring of this central element of Yuletide decoration. Locust Bend was heated with stoves and fire places, and the boy employed to keep sufficient wood in the house found little time for leisure at this particular time of the year.

Christmas of 1945 was probably the time of the last great gathering at Locust Bend. The picture of the group then assembled, as reproduced in these pages, is more indicative than any mere words, though it might be, and accordingly is, observed that the clan was there in near entirety. Jack Roberts, Sally's husband, was still abroad in the chaplaincy; and John Hinckley, the husband of Anne Holman, had not yet returned from service with the army in France. Henry McCoy, husband of Margaret Holman, was the photographer and therefore does not appear in the picture.

The girls went out from Locust Bend and returned with their own children who reveled in the pastimes provided by the wide expanse of the farm. According to the testimony of one of their own number, Maria Spence, who was ten years old at the time of her last visit, the grandchildren were made to feel loved and welcome at Locust Bend. Here they engaged in some generally unaccustomed activities which included feeding dried corn to the pigs, picking blackberries, and playing hide and seek in the fields of corn. They never knew just where they would sleep at night, often switching beds from day to day or, more exactly, from night to night. This particular informant told of finding a

chest of party dresses of the 1920's on one occasion, and of how her Grandmother Holman donated this formal apparel to the finder for "dressing up" purposes. Another cherished impression, lingering with her for more than thirty years, concerned summer evenings spent with the family group, sitting in the yard in chairs made by her Uncle Tom. These chairs were made of walnut lumber from the Locust Bend farm. There were, strange as it may seem, disagreements among them, such as that of the time when Bobby Liston and Tommy Spence reciprocally pounded each other's glasses into powder, having chosen rocks of an appropriate size for this purpose. Maria Spence once expressed approval of affairs in general and particular appreciation of breakfast, as served on the Holman hilltop, "Because nobody ever counts the pieces of bacon you eat." Bobby Liston is said to have been introduced to the joys of chewing tobacco by Floyd Nicholas who lived on the lands of Locust Bend. As one may judge from these examples, life was quite devoid of dulness as it related to the younger set when its representatives gathered at their Grandfather's country seat.

None of the great-grandchildren ever knew the joys of a visit to Locust Bend, for it had passed from the scene some years before even the oldest of them was born. But the grandchildren have repeatedly regaled their sons and daughters with accounts of the nights and days spent under its cordial roof, along with tales of the escapades of those halcyon years during which it loomed so largely and delightfully in their young lives. Perhaps this volume may serve to instil in those of future generations some appreciation of, and love for, that consecrated couple who made their house much more than a home for themselves and their children, that those who follow may join that grateful company who rise up to call them blessed.

With the passage of time and conditions incidental to the encroachment of the years, Dr. Holman finally found it advisable to retire from his practice. Whereupon he sold Locust Bend and

in 1946 moved into a home in Richmond, located at 1826 Grove Avenue, which he had purchased. This removal marked the end of an era, as Locust Bend passed into history and likewise into legend for those who had known and loved the house with its lands, and who were constantly to recall the great and good life which had been theirs within the provident protection of its walls.

The winds of autumn still move across the hills of Goochland. The snows of winter from time to time cover their slopes with white. The recurring spring makes glad the heart of him who, like the central character in one of the most familiar of the parables of our Lord, goes forth to sow his seed, while sun and shower conjoin to crown the endeavors of the faithful husbandman with a fruitful harvest.

But Locust Bend no longer stands in its accustomed place as a center of love, and light, and healing. The laughter of children has ceased to sound from its halls. The tennis court is deserted, its very location now uncertain. The bells of the twilight and those of the dawn are restrained from heralding the time appointed for the rest of the weary or the advent of a new day, laden with fresh opportunities for living and for life. These are now but memories, albeit exceedingly precious ones.

* * * * * *

But that is not all the story. For when, with the last river crossed and all the trumpets sounding, the eye of the incoming pilgrim shall glimpse among the towers and turrets of the New Jerusalem a form in the likeness of the Locust Bend of the years of old, let there be no surprise. For the fashioning of Locust Bend, in essence and in spirit, was not after the fleeting foibles of a shifting earth, but rather the eternal verities of that far and fair land of the many mansions, the seraphs' song, and the Tree of Life whose leaves are "for the healing of the nations."

To E. H. S.

'Mid mountains high I found you,
And e'er shall love them well;
For, with the dark hills round you,
Beneath your charm I fell;
And in those hills I won you
When springtide shone benign;
Their spell was cast upon you
Till you were wholly mine.

So with the night winds resting
Where summits starward soar,
Awearied from their questings,
I'll bless those peaks once more,
Since they, in April, led you
To love me in that spring,
And promise I might wed you
Some summer evening.

From the Author's *North State Refrain*, 1942.

CHAPTER II

Banner Elk in the High Hills

On a summer afternoon in 1924, two twenty-five year old loiterers, Edgar Hall Tufts and Thomas H. Spence, Jr., sat in the entrance hall of Grace Hospital at Banner Elk, North Carolina, curiously awaiting the arrival of Dr. W. C. Tate with a young woman who was to serve as supervisor of the hospital. Dr. Tate presently returned with the new addition to his staff, and introduced the self appointed welcoming committee to his charge. She then passed on to the quarters reserved for her in the building, blissfully, or otherwise, unaware that she had met, not only the president of the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association and the new pastor of the Banner Elk Presbyterian Church but, in the person of the minister, one with whom she was to spend more than fifty of the future years of her life.

Before the new arrival left Richmond, a physician of that city admonished her "not to throw her life away" by going to such a place as he conceived Banner Elk to be. But, somehow, as events unfolded, it all seemed much more illustrative of the commentary of an immeasurably greater physician and teacher as he discoursed upon the losing of one's life and thereby saving it. And so when Mrs. Louis Yelanjian told her of the need for a nurse at Grace Hospital, she eventually prepared to leave Richmond to associate herself with that house of healing in the Avery County hill country of Carolina.

Prior to this time, ministerial duties had frequently taken me to the hospital. The presence there of Elizabeth Holman certainly did not serve to lessen the number of these visits. It was not long before we were discovering opportunities for walks

across the hills together, or rides over the unpaved roads of that era and region in my model T Ford roadster.

The passage of more than half a century has failed to erase the memory of the sight of her in a white uniform as she literally ran up and down the stairs of the hospital in going about her work. There were Cadbury's chocolates available in the Stinson store at Banner Elk, and on more than one night the pastor and nurse ate them together as they were to do in far away Edinburgh on repeated visits to that romantic town. A little shop on the stairs of Waverly Railway Station in the Scottish capital was a convenient source of the same Swiss delicacy. Not surprisingly, purchases of this sweet from the Caledonian shopkeeper always led to recollections of those happy evenings of years before in the little hospital so remote from that great railway station set across the seas in a foreign, but kindly land.

Banner Elk lies at an altitude of almost four thousand feet above the sea and is pleasantly cool in the summer and sometimes unpleasantly cold in winter, with a temperature which once dipped to twenty-eight degrees below zero. Several distinct mountain peaks rise in the vicinity of the town. Beech stands immediately to the north; Hanging Rock and Sugar are not far away; while Grandfather (5,964 feet), the most impressive, though by no means the highest of Carolina's mountains, lies eastward at a distance of eight miles. Many years after our departure from Banner Elk, commercial promoters installed ski runs on the north slopes of Beech and Sugar mountains.

In the 1920's communication between Banner Elk and other points was rather difficult during the winter months, particularly throughout January and February. The roads were such that the use of an automobile was frequently a major problem and at times a practical impossibility. The telephone system during the earlier portion of that decade was not always dependable so far as distant calls were concerned. The mail from Elk Park, eight miles away, a station on the narrow gauge East Tennessee

and Western North Carolina Railway, arrived with commendable promptness, however.

Elk Park was also the closest convenient point at which fresh meat might be obtained and this fact placed a premium upon trips in that direction. A portion of the road from Banner Elk to that railway station ran practically up the side of a mountain, with a steep declivity at its very edge. At points in this particular section it was exceeding narrow, so that the trip over it inevitably partook of the nature of a sporting proposition.

Dr. Tate lived in a house on one side of Grace Hospital and Dr. R. H. Hardin, his colleague, in another on the opposite side, so Elizabeth enjoyed close and continuing contact with the families of these two physicians. Not far distant was the summer home of three saints of this late age and clime from Wilmington, North Carolina, who spent a number of months each year at Banner Elk. These were B. F. Hall, and his daughters, Misses Sue and Jane. Throughout Elizabeth's stay in the community, first as a nurse and then as a minister's wife, they were constantly on the lookout for ways and means for making her life the more enjoyable. At times, another member of the family, Miss Jessie Hall, a missionary to China, was at home to join her father and sisters in their eminently effectual efforts to promote the welfare and happiness of the Virginia nurse in their midst.

In the spring of 1925, Elizabeth and I became engaged. After consultation with her parents, she decided that it would be best to leave her work at Banner Elk for a season. Returning to Richmond, she became associated with St. Elizabeth's Hospital which was situated near Stuart Circle where she had received her training as a nurse. Here she remained until June of the following year, almost up to the eve of her marriage. After a honeymoon at Montreat, as has been noted in the preceding chapter, she and I returned to Banner Elk, and this time she came as the mistress of the manse.

The Pinnacles, a monthly paper published by the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association, carried the following item in its issue of August, 1926:

> The Banner Elk Church welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Spence with a reception on the church lawn. Having first loved Mrs. Spence as Miss Elizabeth Holman, supervisor of Grace Hospital, Banner Elk is glad to have her back as the pastor's wife.

Two different houses figured in her Banner Elk life during the next fifteen months. The first of these was that usually occupied by the superintendent of Grandfather's Orphan Home during the warmer months of the year. After this position, which had been vacant, was filled by the arrival of a superintendent, we moved into a cottage in the rear of the home of Mrs. Edgar Tufts which she graciously provided for us.

In her new position, Elizabeth was ready to take such part in the life and work of the church as had not been possible while at the hospital. She immediately began to serve as a teacher in the primary department of the Sunday School and, of course, became a full participant in the work of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Church.

Soon after our arrival and establishment in the cottage on the grounds of the Orphan' Home, the matron of the Baby Cottage of that institution departed on a vacation. In some unexplainable manner, we found ourselves in charge of that building and, necessarily, its occupants. These were seven little girls which, though not actually babies, were of a tender age. It was our first undertaking of this nature. The children immediately sensed this fact and, at times, acted accordingly. We survived and so did our charges; and the matron, upon her return, found the building intact. The affair turned out to be an interesting, and perhaps profitable, experience in learning by doing and being done unto. It was also an episode in the lives of two temporary custodians which was to be recalled on various occasions when

confronted by one or another of the very young generation within the fold of our own family.

Trips with the boys of the community gave us additional contacts with the younger members of the congregation. One such expedition was to Jonas Ridge for an overnight stay with a view to seeing the Brown Mountain Light, or Lights, a mysterious lumination which rises over the long mountain of that name. The trip was highly successful from the standpoint of fellowship, in spite of the fact that low lying clouds and the accompanying rain combined to prevent a sight of the weird lights, which I had seen several years before from the heights near Blowing Rock.

With the coming of the summer season, there was always a modest influx of visitors into Banner Elk, among whom several Presbyterian ministers were invariably to be found. As a result, the church was blest in its preachers during the warmer months of the year—Banner Elk never became admittedly hot, at least, not in the shade. Robert F. Campbell of Asheville maintained a summer home at Banner Elk and always occupied the local pulpit on two of the six Sundays of his vacation. It was a privilege for the congregation to have him in the community and as their preacher. The Banner Elk pastor reaped recurring profit from his contacts with this distinguished servant of the Lord. Rather interestingly, Dr. Campbell and I were destined to be intimately associated in another work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in later years, as will be presently indicated.

The fact that her husband undertook to conduct five prayer meeting services each week in the summer following Elizabeth's return to Banner Elk as a bride, was to markedly effect her own life. There were nights on which the supper dishes were not washed until we returned from one or another of these gatherings. There were evenings when she was pressed into service as organist in the absence of the regular musician.

The five points involved in the holding of as many week night services were the Banner Elk Church, situated in the center of

the town; the chapel at the Orphan's Home, located a mile away; Arbordale Chapel, a building beyond that Home a mile or so; Hanging Rock Chapel, standing in a valley leading in the direction of the mountain of that name, where Miss Minnie Banner labored long and faithfully as organist and Sunday School teacher; and the home of Mrs. William Draughon, in the opposite direction from Banner Elk. Mrs. Draughon had a living room of sufficient dimensions to accommodate a small gathering and an invalid daughter who eagerly embraced every opportunity for spiritual growth. These two considerations, in conjunction with the hostess' gracious hospitality, joined to make the Draughon home a logical and appropriate place for a weekly assembly. Philemon was not alone in having a church in his house.

Banner Elk had become a well-known Presbyterian center because of the labors of Edgar Tufts who reached the town near the end of the Nineteenth Century and died in 1923 at the age of fifty-three. During the course of his prolific ministry, Mr. Tufts established a school which developed into Lees-McRae Junior College, with an enrollment of between seven and eight hundred students; a hospital which now occupies its fourth building; and Grandfather Home for Children. In addition to the founding of these institutions, he served the local Presbyterian Church during all that part of his life spent in Banner Elk, as well as caring for several other congregations in the surrounding area for many years. After his death, his son, Edgar Hall Tufts, succeeded his father as head of the school and assumed the presidency of the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association upon its founding in 1923, after the passing of the Reverend Edgar Tufts.

Edgar was very interested in Eugenia Stinson of Banner Elk whom he married on September 8, 1925, in the first wedding ceremony which I ever performed. The two of them, both before and after their marriage, and Elizabeth and I often joined

in various outings. What would now be known as cookouts on Grandfather Mountain were examples of such recreative diversions of fifty years and more ago.

After I had spent somewhat more than two years as pastor at Banner Elk, and several months after Elizabeth and I were married, we left for study in Scotland. The following chapter concerns this period spent on a leave of absence from the Banner Elk Church.

The two houses which we occupied before making the trip to Scotland had both been provided with the necessary furnishings. Upon returning after this absence, we acquired a two-burner oil stove, with an oven which fitted over one of the burners, and also an electric hot plate. These supplied the hostess of the manse with such facilities for cooking as were at her disposal throughout the remainder of her stay in Banner Elk. It was difficult at times to believe that the meals which she served could have been prepared with this rather limited equipment.

During our last year at Banner Elk, work was begun on a hard surface road leading from Vilas on the east to Elk Park. This was never completed before our departure from the community. On our return from one particular holiday trip, we encountered a portion of this road then under construction which at length became impassable because the mud in its deep ruts had begun to freeze, so as not only to impede, but to halt our progress. We found shelter in the nearby home of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Triplett who proved most gracious hosts in caring for the stranded wayfarers. The following day being Sunday, I decided to walk the remaining four miles to the Banner Elk Church, leaving Elizabeth behind. It soon became apparent that I was facing a formidable climb for the first half of the distance to be traversed, with the thermometer at four above zero, and a fairly stiff wind blowing from the opposite direction from that in which I was travelling. A light snow which was falling added further zest to the ascent. With the trip safely ended, I con-

ducted the usual Sunday morning service, after which the session decided to cancel that set for the evening of the same day.

A major acquisition made soon after the foregoing experience was that of a Chevrolet coupe. This, of course, replaced the Ford roadster previously in use, which had rendered valiant service under conditions which at times were quite trying.

Early days in the Banner Elk region found the woman of the house depending upon her spouse to bring in game and fish by way of augmentation, if not basic constitution, of their daily fare. If Elizabeth harbored any ideas that such might be the case in her family, she must have been wholly and hopelessly disillusioned. The extent to which I lived up to that early tradition may be judged from the fact that, during our thirty months of residence together in the community, I managed to garner a total of two trout by way of contribution to the family table. My provision of game was not negligable, but nil. Fortunately for our harmony, as well as sustentation, there were other sources from which our larder might be supplied.

In the fall of 1929 we bade farewell to the Banner Elk congregation and the Carolina mountains as we left for New York City where I planned to enroll as a student in the Biblical Seminary, founded by Wilbert W. White and over whose affairs he presided at that time.

SCOTLAND BOUND

Beyond the seas and far away
    Lie regions amply fair.
It is my hope on some good day
    To take my passage there;
To live again the days of old,
Of gracious maids and gallants bold.

Across the broad Atlantic's tide
    I fain would set my sail,
And unto Scotia's kingdom ride
    Through dark, or cloud, or gale;
And, landing on that storied shore,
Seek out its glories to explore.

Could I but walk Old Reekie's streets
    For miles, and miles, and miles,
To meditate upon such feats
    As once perturbed St. Giles;
And hear the story told anew
Of Jennie and the stool she threw.

And then there is Dunfermline Town,
    In Fife's rich realm arrayed,
Where Malcolm Canmore wore the crown
    And Bruce, deceased, was laid.
Entrancing sights must surely be
Beyond the reaches of the sea.

CHAPTER III

Scotland for a Season

On Saturday, October 2, 1926, Elizabeth and I boarded the royal mail steamship *California* of the Anchor Line at New York. Several of our relatives who had come to wish us Bon Voyage accompanied us as we crossed the gangplank onto the relatively small vessel of between sixteen and seventeen thousand tons.

When I assumed the pastorate at Banner Elk it was with the understanding that I was to be given a leave of absence at some future time for the further pursuit of my studies. And now that this future time had come, we were off for Scotland and study at New College and the University of Edinburgh.

Upon entering our cabin, we found an attractive arrangement consisting of two sleeping berths on one side and a sofa set against the wall on the opposite one. This replaced two other berths which had been removed for the voyage, since the cabin was actually designed for occupancy by four persons.

The *California* left New York at noon, and to the surprise of many of its passengers, was still, or rather again, within sight of the North American Continent after sailing for forty-eight hours. Cape Race, the southern tip of Newfoundland, was visible for two or more hours. This was due to the route followed by the ship which passed to the north of Ireland—a different course from that involved in any of our later travels toward Europe. Upon departure the weather was all that could be desired, but soon changed to a combination of cold and fog that counseled passengers to eschew the deck for the warmth of the ship's interior. For a considerable time, the *Bergensfjord*, of the Nor-

wegian Line, moved along within a discreet distance of the *California;* and the fog horn of this craft alternated with that of our ship in notes of effective warning, intensified by the damp sea air.

As might be logically surmised, we were not the only passengers on the ship. Among our fellow travelers were Robert Liston and William B. Sullivan (Sully), my friends and former fellow-students, each of whom was bound for the University of Edinburgh. The Reverend and Mrs. Hugh Elder, the former pastor of the Stockbridge United Free Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh, were also aboard, returning from a trip to Canada and the United States. This couple took a kindly interest in the four Americans and continued this gracious concern by later repeatedly entertaining us at their home in the Scottish Capital.

The *California* carried three classes of passengers, mathematically, and presumably logically, designated as First, Second, and Third. Only sixteen of those who moved among the elite of First Class were on board. We traveled Second Class and this proved to be, not only comfortable and thoroughly satisfactory, but quite enjoyable. But perhaps this statement should be qualified, at least in part, since Elizabeth fell victim to that bane of multitudes of those who have ventured upon the seas from the age of the Argonauts, seasickness—this was before the age of Dramamine.

During the voyage, the ship issued a daily—or almost daily—paper under the title of *Wireless World*. In size it rivaled neither the London nor the New York *Times*, but it was repeatedly welcomed as an avenue of contact with the landed world.

The feature of the trip by way of entertainment was "A Grand Concert," held in the Second Class dining salon on the night of Friday, October 8th. This program closed with the collection of an offering for the Sailors' and Widows' Fund, followed by the singing of Auld Lang Syne, America, and God Save the King.

One member of our party, Robert Liston, who was later to marry Elizabeth's sister, Maria Holman, was somewhat addicted to argumentation; and his verbal jousts with certain Scots of like predilections among the *California's* passengers made noteworthy contribution to the enjoyment, if not edification, of their fellow travelers.

Of more lasting significance was Elizabeth's acquisition of a new name in the course of the voyage. On one morning two plumbers were plying their trade near our cabin when one of them turned to the other with the words, "Hand me that wee wrench." The descriptive adjective which the workman employed made such an impression that I concluded that it might fittingly be adopted as a name for Elizabeth in view of her small size—she was five feet, one inch, in height. Thereupon she became Weeness to me. This name was frequently applied to her by several of her sisters, gaining considerable currency among the members of her family.

The *California* was not a swift boat, requiring eight days to make the passage from New York to Glasgow. On the night of Saturday, October 9th, it approached the north coast of Ireland. The sea was rough at the time, and Weeness preferred the comfort of her berth to a sight of the Inasthrull Light, the first object visible in the old world to the ship's passengers. The following morning she awoke with the *California* at anchor in Moville Bay, disembarking its passengers bound for Londonderry. Here her first sight of land beyond the seas was that of the coast of North Ireland from which her father-in-law had come to the United States as a lad of nineteen.

It was Sunday and a day to be remembered. After its morning departure, the liner passed quite near the Giant's Causeway and then Rathlin, the small, boomerang shaped island where Robert Bruce once sat as the pupil of a spider. Soon the jutting Mull of Kintyre appeared on the left, followed by a view of Ailsa Craig, a rock of some two miles in circumference, rising

unannounced from the depths of the sea and attaining a height of more than eleven hundred feet above the surface of the water. Beyond Kintyre was the isle of Arran dominated by the peak of Goatfell with its summit reaching a height of 2,866 feet. Then the islands became closer and the Firth of Clyde, into which the ship had now entered, grew narrower. On the right loomed Largs, site of an indecisive battle between Haco of Norway and Alexander I of Scotland in October of 1263.

It was a glorious autumn day, with the white surf pounding at the foot of dark cliffs and cattle grazing in the green fields which lay beyond. Scarcely could a more inviting view of the country be imagined. The neophytes from America were not to be alone in admiration of the scenery. Early in 1927 the *California* began a cruise around the world. According to the testimony of its crew, as reported to, and by, the Scottish press, the most beautiful sight of this prolonged voyage was that of the sea, the islands, and the coast as the ship once more approached its home port of Glasgow on the final day of that lengthy odyssey.

The craft now entered the narrow, and narrowing, River Clyde and was soon proceeding at a little more than an accentuated snail's pace, as the low lying banks of that stream seemed to all but press in upon the *California.* Great numbers of the citizens of Glasgow were to be seen as they walked and watched along the shore with the nearing of that city by the boat.

The early darkness of a Scots night had fallen on the 10th of October when the ship tied up at the Glasgow docks, after having been turned around in anticipation of its return passage to New York. For Weeness the moment was a thrilling one as she set foot upon the soil of a land other than that of her birth. She was now in the old world—the old world where everything was to be so new.

It was farewell to the *California.* She was to remember it with

a singular affection, for it was the vessel on which she first became acquainted with the fascination of the deep. According to an informant, whose identity has now been forgotten, the gallant ship went down in the line of duty during the Second World War. But whatever its ultimate destiny, it was always special in the heart of one, or rather two, of its passengers on that voyage of more than half a century ago.

The four Southerners from the United States spent their first night in Scotland at the Central Hotel in Glasgow, where the rooms were heated by coal fires in open grates. Collecting the allotments from the quarters of Sully and Bob Liston and congregating in the room assigned to us, we found that the fuel thus accumulated was sufficient to make at least one good fire. Around this the expatriate quartette assembled for a short while before retiring for a rest anticipatory of novel experiences in a strange world.

Breakfast the next morning was served in a dining room marked by impressive marble columns rising to a high ceiling. Bob Liston, as was equally true of each of his companions, was somewhat awed by his surroundings, and apparently unacquainted with the Scots custom of molding butter into small decorated balls. That he evidently mistook it for another delicacy became evident from his request, "Please pass the candy." By this time we were all fully aware that we were in an unaccustomed world.

When we returned to our room, preparatory to leaving the hotel, there were three maids on their knees cleaning the grate where the fire had burned the evening before.

Soon thereafter an hour's ride covered the forty-five miles separating Edinburgh from Glasgow, as our party moved eastward on a train of the London, Midland, and Scottish Railway. Emerging from the Caledonian Station at the western end of Edinburgh's Princes Street, one of the great urban sights of the world met our eyes as Edinburgh Castle rose high in the air,

surprisingly close to the station itself. Below lay the famous gardens that stretch for a considerable distance along the south side of the street, bordered by that three-quarter-mile thoroughfare itself, characterized by the envious citizens of Glasgow as "only half a street," since its northern side alone is occupied by buildings.

The next step in order, and a very important one, was the seeking out of a place in which to live while in Edinburgh. Mrs. Elizabeth Blakeley of 46 Lochrin Buildings, near Toll Cross, had reserved a room for Bob Liston; and we were hopeful of engaging accommodations from the same landlady. Hugh Hamilton, a former college and seminary friend, had previously boarded with Mrs. Blakeley, and suggested that we endeavor to obtain lodgings at her apartment. Mrs. Blakeley, however, had recently experienced some difficulty with a woman as roomer and expressed cautious restraint at the prospect of laying the groundwork for a possible repetition of this unpleasantness. She did promise to consider the matter while we went out for lunch.

Upon our return to the Lochrin Buildings, we received a welcome answer to our request, as she affirmed a willingness to take us as lodgers. In this connection, Bob Liston gallantly gave up his claim to the large room which he had reserved, and established himself in a smaller one in order that these arrangements might be completed.

A warm friendship soon developed between Mrs. Blakeley and Weeness. The Scots housekeeper was versed, not only in Scottish and English lore, but frequently demonstrated a competency in that of other lands. On one occasion she corrected her daughter, Peggy, when the latter referred to us as "Yankees." At Christmas "Bruin," Peggy's teddy bear, presented Weeness with a little volume entitled *How to Cook Correctly*, and inscribed it, "To Mrs. Spence for the sake of Mr. Spence, with best wishes. Christmas in Scotland, 1926."

The arrangement under which our landlady provided for her

guests was known as "Rooms and Service." The term "Service" indicated that she would prepare and serve their meals, but excluded the cost of the food involved. Instead, each Saturday night she submitted a statement for the items placed upon the table during the week ending on that evening. This proved to be a quite satisfactory plan for everyone concerned.

Edinburgh revealed itself as a city of constant fascination for the bride from what the Scots call "The States." One of her first acquisitions in Scotland was a pattern for needlework with which she planned to while away the hours that passed when she found nothing else to do. These apparently never came, since she discarded the pattern many years afterward without ever having touched the fabric by way of completion. Scotland was much too alluring for time to be devoted to handiwork. There was the Edinburgh zoo, and menageries had always appealed to her. The sea was not far away and provided a place for recurring excursions. On one such trip she encountered a sign at Porto Bello, a resort near Edinburgh, which proclaimed "American Cold Dogs, 6d."

The American Club at the University, presided over by Jack Thomas, afforded an opportunity to mingle with other students from America. Among its members were Frank Caldwell and Bob McLeod, along with their wives, who provided further representation for the South and the Southern Presbyterian Church in that famous center of Presbyterianism.

For two successive performances, Bob Liston, Weeness, and I took our places among the devotees of what is generally known as culture, as exemplified by the opera. The King's Theater was only half a block from Mrs. Blakeley's apartment, and our presence there on one night, at an outlay of forty-eight cents per person, was followed by my suggestion that the next evening be passed in the same manner. This was based upon the presumption that Parsifal was to be presented on this second evening.

Reaching the theater after the performance had begun, we

were somewhat puzzled at the nature of what we saw and heard. There was certainly nothing related to the Holy Grail in the script. Bob Liston, during an intermission, secured a program which resolved this perplexity. The opera in progress was far from that which we had expected, but rather either Tosca or Tristan and Isolde—I fail to remember which of the two came that particular night—and so far as I was concerned, the one was as equally as trying of patience as the other. Upon reference to the listing in the newspaper, I had hit upon the right night for Parsifal but, unfortunately, upon the wrong week.

Good fortune smiled on us with respect to another diversion, however, in that the triennial election of a University rector fell in 1926. The Conservative candidate was John Gilmour, Secretary of State for Scotland, and that of the Liberal Party was John Maynard Keynes, whose economic theories were to play such havoc with finances both in his own land and in the United States.

Preliminary election festivities among the students always included attempts on the part of the members of each party to kidnap the president of the opposing one. In 1923 one such official reputedly found himself on board a ship bound for Norway as the day for balloting approached.

Weeness watched the most thrilling incident of the election, the rectorial fight, from the second story balcony of the inner side of the quadrangle of the Old University building, while the contest itself was waged in the large arena below. The representatives of one part entrenched themselves on a platform at one end of this space, while those of the other endeavored to dislodge them from that position. As the assailants captured one after another of the defenders of the platform, the attackers bound the arms and legs of their victims to their sides and stacked them in piles reminiscent of the storing of cordwood. Ancient fish were prominent among the articles of ammunition,

while a very yellow dye was in abundant evidence throughout the battle. The assailants finally cleared the platform of its defenders.

The Conservative candidate won the election, if the memory of one who voted for him is correct. When the results were announced, the Principal (President) of the University addressed himself to the students, "Now get back to your books." Upon this, they promptly marched out of the quadrangle and on down to Princes Street where they formed a parade, led by the president of the victorious party atop a taxi with a large sign indicating the numerical results of the voting.

Meal Monday, a holiday which had persisted in annual recurrence, regardless of the reason for its observance having long since passed, gave the students a respite from academic duties and freed us for elective activities. Meal Monday arose from a desire to permit the University student to return home on a particular Saturday near the spring midterm, attend the services of the kirk on Sunday, and to come back to Edinburgh on Monday, laden with a bag of meal and a keg of herring, staples of food designed to provide sustenance for the remainder of the school year.

Ice cream could scarcely be obtained in Edinburgh in 1926, being available at a very limited number of places. By 1956 it had come into its own, was to be had almost everywhere, and invariably arrived with a wafer stuck by the corner in the ice cream itself. The Americanization of Britain was effectually progressing.

Pre-Reformation Scottish ecclesiastical architecture is at times not very conducive to the most intent following of a minister's sermon. On one morning in 1926 we fell heir to seats behind a large pillar in the sometime cathedral of St. Giles. We never saw the preacher while he spoke, nor were we able to identify him in the procession which marched from the sanc-

tuary at the close of the service. On later visits to the same center of worship, we were much more favorably located as members of the congregation.

While in Edinburgh Weeness and I also attended services at a number of other churches of the city: Barclay, near the Lochrin Buildings; Charlotte Chapel (Baptist) where Dr. Graham Scroggie was the pastor; Free St. George's, where Dr. James Black preached; Lauriston Place, a United Free Church in the general vicinity of Mrs. Blakeley's; St. Cuthbert's, adjacent to the Princes Street Gardens; and St. Mary's Cathedral, seat of an Episcopal bishopric.

After living in Edinburgh for somewhat more than two months, we moved northward across the Firth of Forth to Dunfermline, reached by the great railway bridge over that inland arm of the sea. Dunfermline was seventeen miles from the Scottish Capital. This change of residence came about as the result of my assumption of the duties of assistant minister of the North United Free Church of Dunfermline in December of 1926. The proximity of Edinburgh, coupled with the frequency of train service between the two places, made it quite practical to live in the one and attend classes in the other. The duties incumbent upon the assistant minister were largely related to the services held on Sunday, though there were certain other matters calling for attention from time to time during the week.

The minister of the North United Free Church, Robert W. Reid, treated me with exceeding graciousness, the only admonition which I can recall having received from him coming in the form of an injunction not to work too hard. He and I alternated in preaching at the Sunday morning service, as was likewise true of the evening one. The minister not thus engaged in the evening conducted worship at what was known as the Institute, located in the coal mining village of Wellwood, lying on the edge of Dunfermline and within easy walking distance of both the United Free Church and our residence.

The kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Reid proved unforgettable so far as we were concerned. Three daughters, Catherine, Alice, and Nettie, completed the membership of the Reid household. Catherine (Cathy) and Weeness soon began a friendship which was to last for fifty years, renewed upon each of Weeness's later visits to Scotland, and sustained through correspondence in the meantime. While walking with Mr. Reid on the way for my first sermon in the Dunfermline Church, I was happily and comfortably reassured as he turned to me and said, "Remember, the people here need the same gospel that they need in Banner Elk."

We rented the first floor of a house located at 39 Castle Blair Park upon our arrival in Dunfermline, at a monthly cost of 5 £ (approximately $24 at that time). The upper apartment in this stone cottage was occupied by a Mr. and Mrs. Howie, a couple associated with the Salvation Army. Our quarters consisted of a parlor and a bedroom at the front of the house, both fronting on the sidewalk. The kitchen was at the rear, alongside a bath, while a multipurpose room lay between the kitchen and the bedroom. This served as a dining room, sitting room, and study; and, due to the fact that a bed was located in a niche in one of its walls, normally shut off by a red curtain, did additional service as a guest room. To the rear of the house was an attractive garden.

Soon after she became settled in this home, Weeness expressed enthusiastic approval of these arrangements in a letter to her father:

> Being in Dunfermline is simply fine and keeping house is so much nicer than not having anything to do. Our little house is so comfortable and everything is convenient.

She soon fell into the Scots ways of conducting the affairs of her home. Among the routine tasks of the woman of each household was that of polishing the brass nameplate on the front door of her house. The philosophical Bob Liston solved her problem

in this connection in a very consolatory manner, when he directed attention to the fact that the plate at 39 Castle Blair Park did not bear the Spence name and, therefore, the tenants were absolved from all obligation of giving it frequent attention.

Each weekday, arrayed in a brown hat and coat dominated by a large fur collar, and carrying her collapsable market basket with the huge key to her back door in its bottom, Weeness set forth for the shopping section of Dunfermline. Here she made the rounds of the dairy, the bakery, and the grocery shops.

At times we spent our evening before the grate with its coal fire, as I read aloud from one or another of the books which had been borrowed from the first of all the Carnegie libraries. The sundry tales of Sherlock Holmes were favorites in this connection. Soon after establishment in her Dunfermline home, Weeness wrote to her father, "The library is a joy to us."

Dunfermline was a city of some forty thousand population and a place of considerable renown. Here Malcolm Canmore and his saintly queen, Margaret, had lived and ruled. It was the birthplace of Charles I of England and Scotland and, in a much later age, of Andrew Carnegie who showered numerous benefactions upon it. Dunfermline succeeded Iona as the burial place of kings, and Robert Bruce lies under the pulpit of its New Abbey Church. It was long a busy center for the manufacture of linen, with its works later converted to the production of textiles and materials made from artificial fibers.

Among the princely gifts of Carnegie to his birthplace was a lovely park, known as the Glen, a name which effectually distinguishes it from "The Park" at the opposite end of Dunfermline. A tea room was among the Glen's attractions, as were concerts by various bands during the late spring and summer months. This was an ideal place for resort and one to which we occasionally turned while in the city.

On Christmas Day of 1926, a fire was laid in the parlor of our home, a Christmas tree, six feet in height, was purchased at the

cost of a shilling per foot, and duly installed in the same room. Cathy Reid was guest for dinner on this occasion. "Thomas gave me a lovely pair of fur lined gloves which are certainly needed over here, I gave him a scarf," was the report of Weeness to Dr. Holman with regard to the gifts exchanged at this Christmas season.

Weeness did far more walking at Dunfermline than was her practice after leaving Scotland. The Lower Railway Station was more than a mile from Castle Blair Park and the Upper Station about half that distance. One or the other of these was always involved in her frequent trips to Edinburgh. The Canmore golf course lay about three-quarters of a mile from her home, thus necessitating the covering of one and one-half miles, in addition to touring the course, whenever she joined me at golf. This was not an infrequent occurrence at certain seasons, as may be judged from the fact that on eleven consecutive days in March of 1927 she played that venerable Scottish game seven times.

Among the occasional callers at the Castle Blair house were members of the Dunfermline police force. The object of their visitation was to check on its residents as aliens. They were uniformly courteous and always enjoined us to report to them when we planned to leave Dunfermline.

Professional tramps were also among those stopping by soon after we arrived. These wanderers found that such visits were not profitable and soon ceased to make their calls.

A welcome guest who came for a week's visit was my father, the Reverend Thomas H. Spence, Sr. He preached from the pulpit of the North United Free Church on Sunday, June 5, 1927, which I occupied for the last time on the evening of the same day.

Another visitor from overseas was Pocahontas Wight, later Mrs. Richard Edmunds, who had taken part in our wedding the year before. She was on her way to Paris for the study of violin.

There Weeness later enlisted her services in the purchase of a dress when we reached the French Capital.

With the passage of time, Weeness had enlarged the circle of her friends in Dunfermline, chiefly from those of the membership of the North United Free Church. Invitations to tea and for motor trips came more and more frequently during the spring of 1927. These included a ride to St. Andrews where the hostess of a tea room made profound apologies for the apparently unpardonable offence of serving hot scones. The Trossachs were the objective of another expedition, as was Aberdour where my namesake, Sir Patrick Spens, is said to have been pacing the sands when summonsed for the tragic voyage which terminated in the death of Sir Patrick and his companions.

The sole athletic contest which Weeness attended while in Dunfermline was a cricket match. Here the players, in keeping with inescapable tradition, took the usual time out for tea in the course of the contest.

Weeness's first actual contact with Ireland came on the week before Easter, 1927, as she and I left Dunfermline on Monday, April 14th, for Ulster. Following an afternoon in the Burns country, we spent the night at Stranraer on a boat departing for Larne early the following morning. This enabled us to see much of Belfast, the Capital of Northern Ireland, prior to taking an evening train for Ballymena. The next afternoon was given over to a visit to my relatives whose home was about three miles from the Ballymena station. Later on the two of us moved on by train to Portrush, a resort town jutting out into the sea, much after the manner of the Florida peninsula. Here we found pleasant rooms at the Skerry Bahn, remaining until Friday. It was then back across the North Channel, to Glasgow for the night, and on to Dunfermline the following morning.

During the last ten weeks in Dunfermline, I added a Tuesday night service at an outlying center known as Milesmark. This was not an organized church but was made up of a congregation

June Bride, 1926

The Groom

Dunfermline, 1927
Elizabeth, Thomas, and
Thomas H. Spence, Sr.

With Tommy, 1931

of whom the majority appeared to be engaged in working a sort of private coal mine. The Milesmark experience proved to be a novel, interesting, and profitable one, quite different from that associated with the downtown church and Wellwood.

The final days at Dunfermline were busy ones. A soiree at the Milesmark Mission, where Weeness and I sat at a table on the platform of the meeting hall as official farewells were said, was among the memorable events of this period. Teas at the homes of friends, two on the same day in one instance, and a soiree at the North United Free Church in our honor at which Weeness was presented with a fine assortment of Dunfermline linens, all went to make these closing days times of enjoyment.

At the end of the last service at which I preached, the choir of the North United Free Church, in keeping with a Scottish custom, turned to face me and sang:

> The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
> The Lord make his face to shine upon thee,
> And be gracious unto thee:
> The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give
> thee peace.

The next morning we took a train for London. When we next returned to Dunfermline, twenty-nine years later, many of those present on that June evening of 1927 were no longer numbered among the members of any earthly congregation.

Leaving Edinburgh on the *Flying Scotsman* of the London and Northeastern Railway on that morning of June 6th, we reached London about six in the afternoon, and immediately went to 63 Gower Street, in the Russell Square section of the metropolis, where we had previously engaged a room. There was much daylight left after six in that London day and we utilized these hours to the utmost advantage, visiting the Westminster Abbey and House of Parliament area, followed by a trip over London Bridge and a stop at the Fire Monument.

We had budgeted exactly $225 for our London stay and some ten days in Paris and Lucerne, arriving at this figure without undue deliberation, since it represented all the funds in our possession, save those necessary to cover the cost of return to Banner Elk.

The Newhaven and Dieppe sea route to Paris was selected for the reason that it was less costly than by Dover and Calais or by Folkstone and Boulogne. It was not only cheaper but also much less comfortable, as Weeness reported through a letter from Paris when she wrote, "The crossing was awfully rough."

"Paris at last," she exclaimed in a letter to her mother of June 7, 1927. She had looked forward to being there and had given earlier evidence of this anticipation when writing in the previous January as she confessed, "I can hardly wait to get to France."

The same letter explained that we did not expect to include Italy in our travels "because it costs too much." At this time she could not forsee that we were to make repeated trips to Italy in the future years, as well as revisiting France on even more of our journeyings.

After several days in Paris, in the course of which we saw many of the better known sights of the city, we left for Lucerne, not, however, before Weeness had purchased two Parisian dresses. Louise Sparrow of New York, who was in Paris studying interior decorating, accompanied us to Switzerland. Upon reaching Lucerne, we registered at the Hotel Rossli.

From Lucerne we made three major excursions, one to the top of nearby Mount Pilatus, another down the Lake of Lucerne to the William Tell country, and a third to Interlaken and the Bernese Oberland. After arriving at the top of Pilatus, a magnificent view of the Oberland mountains stretched out before us in almost awesome fashion. Unfortunately we saw nothing whatsoever of this expansive panorama, due to the lowering clouds and the downpour of rain throughout the entire trip.

The ride down the Lake on a paddle-wheel steamer was lovely and the day a thoroughly enjoyable one, while the all-day motor excursion to Interlaken, the Trümmelbach and Staubbach Falls, and Grindelwald was set down as among the memorable experiences of our lives. The magnificent peaks of the Eiger, the Monch, and the Jungfrau stood out in all their pristine beauty in the clear air of a perfect day.

The return to England included a night's stopover in Paris, a recrossing of the Channel, again by the least desirable but also the least expensive of the sea routes, and then several days in London.

On the morning of June 21st, we proceeded to the Waterloo Station, with which we were to become increasingly familiar with the passing years, and took a boat train to Southampton. Here we boarded the United States liner, the *Leviathan*, for New York.

SEERS IN THE CITY

They watched Manhattan's towers
Climb cloudward through the air,
Of steel and concrete fashioned
In rich design and rare;

Enduring in a union,
Fast wedded to the rock,
And firm against encroachment
Of time's dissolving shock.

There was no other like her,
Nor ever could there be,
In glory and in splendor
Magnificent to see.

The man from Memphis marvelled;
The lass from Lanark gazed;
Bewildered by such wonders,
They look aloft, amazed.

But deep within the shadows,
And silent all the while,
A shade from ancient Babel
Looked on with strangely smile.

CHAPTER IV

Sojourn in New York

AFTER a brief visit to Rocky River upon departure from Banner Elk, we spent several days at Locust Bend before leaving for New York and entrance into the Biblical Seminary for the academic year 1929–1930.

The renting of a New York apartment for a moderately lengthy occupancy presented a problem in that it was difficult to obtain such quarters without signing a lease for a definite period of time, usually a year. The agent for one large residential complex in the general area of Jackson Heights on Long Island agreed to an arrangement whereby the monthly rental would be slightly increased for the first six months in lieu of such a lease. This agreement was duly recorded on the back of the receipt covering the first month's rent.

The resident manager of the apartment house proved to be a woman from Holywood in Northern Ireland, the general region from which my father had come to the United States in 1887. This fact tended toward the formation of a spirit of congeniality between the manager and her tenants, manifest in the fact that she always remained for a chat when calling to collect the rent. At the end of the first six months, this landlady and her husband were the only persons in the buildings with whom we had become acquainted.

The duties of a housewife were essentially the same in New York as they had been in Scotland. In this instance they involved an almost daily visit to one of the several markets operated on Roosevelt Boulevard, the main North-South thoroughfare of the community. Since I frequently remained in downtown New

York through lunch time, Weeness reserved her main meal of the day for the evening hour.

The walk to the subway, paradoxically set high in the air in Queens, plus the time necessary for travel to either the Biblical Seminary or to Times Square, was about forty-five minutes. The fare for the trip, however, was only five cents, and this was one factor in the selection of Queens as a place of residence. The other, and main consideration, lay in the lower rents prevalent in the outlying boroughs as compared with the costs in Manhattan.

Robert G. Sparrow, my uncle who lived in New York, underwrote the rent for our apartment. He explained this generosity by reference to the fact that many years ago my father had shown certain favors to him. Among Mr. Sparrow's benefactions was the gift of a radio. Those were the days of "The Adventures of Polly Preston," and the time when everyone within auditing distance of a receiver always contrived to listen to Amos and Andy. Football and baseball games were being broadcast, while Uncle Don of Radio Station WOR of Newark drew many listeners of more mature age with his program ostensibly designed for children.

Mr. Sparrow seemed always intent upon planning some favor for us. In addition to Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow, his family consisted of a son, Robert, Jr., two daughters, Helen (Mrs. William Caldwell) and Louise, later to become the wife of John Mitchell. During our stay in New York, Robert Sparrow, Jr., married Elizabeth Thomas at a wedding which we attended.

Although he spent most of his career in the business world, Mr. Sparrow was an outstanding student from his college days. After his death in 1947, the *Davidson College Bulletin* of June of the following year carried the following notation in the course of a sketch of his life: "He was valedictorian of his class and as far as has been determined he received the highest grades that have ever been earned here."

In taking meals away from home while in New York, we tended to patronize the Automats rather than the Waldorf for quite obvious reasons. As a matter of fact, this was the general era in which the old Waldorf was being razed to make way for the Empire State Building, while the new Waldorf, farther up town, had not been erected.

Preston Evans, an uncle of Weeness's, was residing in New York in 1929–1930, and his presence contributed substantially to her enjoyment of the time spent in the city. He frequently called at the Jackson Heights apartment and these visits lent an additional Virginia touch to the lives of its occupants.

A characteristic of the educational opportunities presented by New York City was, not only the great size of its libraries, but also their multiplicity. This made it possible to pursue the study of a topic of interest in considerable depth within its boundaries. Philadelphia, with its Presbyterian Historical Society, was only ninety miles away; and this proximity further enhanced the attractiveness of the area with respect to the interests of anyone concerned with Presbyterian history.

Contacts with Wilbert W. White, founder and president of the Biblical Seminary, constituted a major factor in drawing us to New York. Dr. White was the formulator of an approach in the teaching of the Bible which was to directly influence such instruction in a number of institutions, both theological seminaries and colleges, across the next academic generation.

Another member of the Biblical Seminary faculty was Andrew R. Osborn, an Australian by birth, who had come to New York by way of Canada. My major work at the Seminary was done under his guidance. We had met during the previous summer at the Columbiona-on-Lake George conference. This marked the beginning of a friendship which continued until the time of Dr. Osborn's death a number of years later (1949) when he served as pastor of the West End Presybyterian Church in Manhattan. Mrs. Osborn was herself an author of note in Aus-

tralia. Fellowship with the Osborn family was a source of much pleasure to us during these times.

Weeness attended but one athletic contest while in New York. This was a football game between New York University and the University of Georgia. On the other hand, I was present at a number of baseball games, chiefly those in which the Yankees participated. These were the glory days for that team as it featured Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and their team mates in its daily lineup. At one game I saw both Tris Speaker and Ty Cobb, each wearing the uniform of the Philadelphia Athletics, play against the Yankees for a brief period.

New York offered its residents numerous opportunities for church going. We attended services at Brick, Broadway, Fifth Avenue, First, Lafayette Avenue (Brooklyn), Madison Avenue, Newtown (Queens), and West End Presbyterian Churches. Other downtown churches at which we worshipped were Calvary Baptist, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (Episcopal), First Baptist, First Congregational, and Marble Collegiate (Dutch Reformed).

An unusual religious gathering—at least for us—in which we participated, at least to the extent of attendance, was a meeting of the Oxford Group in the Episcopal Church of which Sam Shoemaker was pastor. Even more unique was the celebration of Old Scots night at the Newtown Presbyterian Church, with a piper in full regalia and action on either side of the communion table during the course of the evening.

Macy's Thanksgiving parade, with its gigantic balloon figures, was notable among the secular events of the fall of 1929. This was before the days of television which later brought such attractions within the view of people throughout the whole of the country and the world. Another parade of interest was held on St. Patrick's Day. It was difficult to conceive of so many Irishmen gathered in one city, as the loyal sons of Erin marched

along Fifth Avenue on the seventeenth of March with their green ties and proud steps. Needless to say, all aspiring politicians in the city were careful to have their presence noted by such numbers of potential voters. The so-called Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue, as encountered after attending services in the Presbyterian Church of that name, was not so much a parade as a display of fashions in an unorganized and informal manner, as its participants strolled along the sidewalks of central New York.

Weeness saw and heard her first sound motion picture at the old Capitol Theater in the spring of 1930 in my company and that of two of my fellow-students, Edgar Woods and Pete Richardson. The two were then missionaries to China on furlough, and were spending a term in study at the Biblical Seminary. Another excursion made by the same four was directed to Brooklyn in order to hear John Timothy Stone speak at the Lafayette Avenue Church. This expedition served effectively to reveal to each of the party the intricacies of the New York subway system and the facility with which one may become lost therein.

It was not necessary to enter any place of formalized amusement in New York with the purpose of finding entertainment. The city itself supplied a vast background against which its inhabitants and visitors combined to form a living spectacle sufficient to gain and hold the attention of all having an interest in the actions and antics of humanity. And there was diversion available at a ridiculously low outlay. For an expenditure of ten cents—five cents each way—it was possible to take the Staten Island ferry at the lower tip of Manhattan and enjoy the thrill of sailing over five miles of water in each direction. It was a voyage complete with sea breezes; and, upon the return trip, a view of the New York skyline identical with that presented to the eyes of a passenger aboard a luxury liner approaching the

port at the end of his journey. The elevated trains were still running and afforded grandstand seats for those who wished to invest five cents in making a survey of the island.

One of our favorite outings consisted in a trip to the Battery for a view of ships leaving the harbor as they passed that point of entrance into the Upper Bay of New York's waterways. In the course of an early attempt to reach this point of vantage, we became confused by the subways, missed our way, and decided to spend some time in riding such trains in that area and over into Brooklyn. This procedure amply justified itself as an effort to become acquainted with the various routes traversed by these cars.

In the spring of 1930 we joined a large party from the Biblical Seminary who chartered a small steamer for visiting West Point. This not only afforded a tour of the grounds of the Military Academy and the opportunity to see a number of its athletic teams in action, but gave the passengers an intimate look at many miles of the Hudson River. Among the sports in progress at West Point was a game of lacrosse, the first and last such contest attended by the couple from Banner Elk.

Several welcome visitors came as guests to the Jackson Heights apartment in the same spring. Two of these were sisters of Weeness, Mary, later Mrs. William Curd, and Katherine, afterwards married to Larry MacKallor. They were followed by Mrs. Thomas H. Spence, Sr., sister of Mr. Sparrow, who was on her first trip to New York. At this stage of our stay in the city, we were prepared to conduct these out of towners around its streets and to points of interest with comfortable assurance.

During our final month in New York we lived in the Biblical Seminary building at 235 East 49th Street, in an area which has been greatly revitalized in later years by the erection of the United Nations center. This residency gave Weeness an opportunity to become acquainted with many of the seminary students and to actually participate in a number of their ac-

tivities. It also placed her where the points of interest in the central portion of the city became readily accessible. These were times when the streets of New York were relatively safe and moving about Manhattan was unattended by the hazards of later years.

Window shopping became one of her favorite recreations. The month of May, the period spent at the Seminary, was warm and the sidewalks of New York, as well as furnishing the theme for a popular song, possessed the faculty of retaining the heat of the day well into the evening hours. On account of this, it was frequently necessary to curtail examination of many window displays, since keeping in motion served to escape from much of the heat rising from the pavement. But heat or no heat, it was a lot of fun.

With the end of May and commencement, Weeness was now to prepare for a move to what was an unexplored section of the country so far as she was concerned.

Thus far she had lived for a goodly time in several places, each of them very different from the others—a country home dedicated to the glory of God and committed to the gracious and gentle art of healing; a moderately sized city not far from the site at which the English first succeeded in establishing themselves in the New World and itself the former capital of the Confederacy; a mountain village markedly influenced by the ministry of a single man of God and of the Gospel; a fascinating foreign center of learning and of Presbyterianism; and a world metropolis, in some respects with regard to matters material, exceeding anything previously known to man. Each of these had left its own impression upon her, and more, two more, were yet to come.

SPRING SONG FOR NEBRASKA PRAIRIE

Can I forget those June days on the prairie,
And such bright stars as nighttide there discerned,
On lands light touched by some indulgent fairy,
And to the green of spring withal returned?

Can I forget swift shadows on rich wheat fields
As scattered clouds rode wild below the blue,
Or watered rows, to mark the fertile beet fields,
And lines of corn scarce risen into view?

I'll not forget those soft nights on the prairie
As years pass on, their good and ill to bring;
Though tide may change and fitful fortune vary,
I'll always love the West in days of spring.

And some good night, upon that distant prairie,
On lands laid long across the world's wide face,
Once more I'll stand in vision solitary,
When Spring and I have met in that blest place.

From *North State Refrain.*

CHAPTER V

Nebraska Interlude

DURING the ten days which I spent at Columbiona-on-Lake George in the summer of 1929, the dozen or so participants in the conference devoted their mornings to study and discussion, while seated around a single table on a porch built out over the lake. These conferees were given a choice as to how they would spend the afternoon hours, this option being between taking part in the building of a road up a mountain on the Columbiona estate or playing tennis. I never so much as discovered where the road building was in progress.

For a number of enjoyable afternoons, I joined A. R. Wentz of Gettysburg Theological Seminary, Frederick W. Lewis, at that time vice-president of the Biblical Seminary, and the latter's graduate student son on the Columbiona tennis court. Dr. Lewis had formerly been president of the College of Emporia in Kansas and was conversant with many matters in the field of education as related to the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

In the early spring of 1930 he called me to his office at the seminary and informed me that Hastings College, located in the Nebraska town of the same name, was in search of a teacher of Religion who would act as head of that department in the college. He also volunteered to contact the Hastings authorities in this connection.

Soon afterward, Calvin H. French, the scholarly president of Hastings, appeared unexpectedly at our Long Island apartment. In the course of the evening's conversation, Weeness inquired of the visitor, "Do you have cyclones at Hastings?" His reas-

suring reply was, "We have never had one." As matters turned out, it was well that he confined himself to the role of reporter rather than assuming that of prophet. It may be added that the Hastings president presumably called that night in order to see Weeness, since he and I had an appointment at the Biblical Seminary on the following morning.

Without further preliminaries, Dr. French offered the position in question to me, which I formally accepted several weeks later. About this time a tornado did visit Hastings and literally lifted the roof off the house where we were to live. The rain poured in for a number of days following, which resulted in our moving into a practically new dwelling in which to begin life in Hastings.

Two primary rail routes connected Richmond with Hastings, one of which ran through Cincinnati, St. Louis, and then on to Grand Island, twenty-five miles north of our Nebraska destination. The other moved by way of Cincinnati, Chicago, and then to Hastings or Grand Island. In either instance, the trip consumed two days. Since Weeness had undergone an operation near the end of the summer, she made the westward journey alone, a month after I had reached Hastings.

Hastings itself was then a place of sixteen thousand inhabitants, six hundred and fifty miles west of Chicago, a hundred and fifty miles west of Omaha, and three times that distance from Denver, lying in the opposite direction. It was within fifty miles of the geographical center of the United States. In 1930 four railroads ran through, or to, Hastings—the Burlington, the Union Pacific, the Missouri Pacific, and the Chicago and Northwestern. The Burlington was the chief of these so far as passenger service was concerned.

Upon Weeness's arrival she found that her home was actually on the campus of the college and that her address was 722 East Ninth Street. Next door was the home economics building under the supervision of Miss Angeline Wood. Miss Wood was the

older of the two neighbors and had been at Hastings for some years. A sustained friendship developed between her and the recent arrival, which was continued even after Weeness had left the West.

The college dining hall was located within a short distance of 722 East Ninth, and we took our meals there for some time after coming to Hastings. A cafeteria, operated by the local Y. W. C. A., and situated in downtown Hastings, was a favorite place for away-from-home meals.

As was the case in New York, public transportation was cheap in the community, with bus rides costing only a nickel. For the first five and a half years at the college we did not own an automobile. This lent special importance to the availability of public conveyances, since we were some distance from the Presbyterian Church and the main stores of Hastings.

Since Hastings was the center of a sizable farming area and was itself the home of a considerable number of people, its stores were relatively numerous and offered merchandise of a desirable quality. One of the best of them failed to weather the depression which we had left in New York and the East, but soon reached out over the entire country.

Notable in the life of Weeness was the birth of our two children during these Nebraska years. Thomas Kirkpatrick was born in Richmond on October 8, 1931, and Maria at Hastings on January 2, 1935. Since the family was dependent upon trains for moving between Locust Bend, in Virginia, and Rocky River, in North Carolina, and Nebraska until the spring of 1936, the younger Spences began extended rail travel at very early ages. On one occasion, due to having missed a connection, the parents and Tommy boarded an eastbound train in St. Louis with pullman reservations consisting of one upper berth. Further accommodations proved to be available from the conductor, however, and the journey was completed in comfortable and satisfactory fashion.

The First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, of which Alva King was pastor, was the family's place of worship while in the West. Our customary seat was on the back pew in the gallery of the building, since there was sufficient space in front of this particular location to permit the children to move about. On one particular Saturday Tommy had attended a football game at the college, leaving at the halftime period of the contest. The following morning in church, after he had absorbed what he considered a sufficient portion of Dr. King's sermon, he turned to me with the suggestion, "Daddy, let's leave at the half."

Tommy had a friend by the name of Gene Maunder. When the two were together there seemed to be some strong urge impelling them to run away. One such unauthorized absence stretched out to between four and five hours, with the Hastings police and taxi drivers joining the family and friends in search of the two boys. Maria showed far less inclination to absent herself from the family hearth without giving due notice of an intent to seek out new surroundings.

Hastings College provided numerous events for the pleasure and edification of its students, faculty, and the community. There were plays presented by the department of drama, headed by Jennie Waugh; band concerts with Jimmy King in command; concerts by the symphony orchestra under the direction of Frank Noyes; debates with the protegees of Leroy Laase in competition; and always an annual grand choral program conducted by Hayes Fuhr. Athletic contests took place throughout the year—football, basketball, track, and tennis. Hastings never fielded a baseball team in the 1930's. All in all, the college made the community a much more attractive place in which to live than would otherwise have been the case.

During four of the Hastings years (1932–1936), Weeness's sister, Margaret Holman, was in charge of the woman's physical education department of the college. She roomed at the Spence home and took her meals at the college dining hall. Her presence

made a major contribution to the life of our household with regard to both the children and their parents.

With the passage of time—and not so much time at that—722 East Ninth Street became a sort of clubhouse for a number of the younger members of the college faculty. Ralph Robbins, Susanne Koenigsberger (later Mrs. Ralph Robbins), Donald Strout, Adolph Weiser, Bob Westhafer, Roberta Brittle (later Mrs. Robert Westhafer), and Clifford Julstrom were among those who constituted this informal fellowship. There were nights when monopoly games continued until well into the morning hours, with contestants leaving at 2 A.M. and the snow of a Nebraska winter on the ground. The hostess almost always served hot chocolate on such occasions during the colder months of the year.

Efforts to provide, or rather to retain, a dog for Tommy were repeatedly unsuccessful. His first such pet, a Spitz by the name of Dixie and a gift from Ralph Robbins, died after a time. The second dog obtained was soon discovered to have been stolen by the boy who sold it from a house some distance down our own street; while the third and last turned out to be an older dog, rather than a puppy as represented by its seller, which ran away after a short while.

A Hastings veterinarian briefly imagined himself to be on the verge of the discovery of a new canine disease when called to treat Dixie for an illness symptomized by the dog's running around in circles. It developed that the little Spitz had caught the fur on his right side between his teeth, pulling his head sideways in such a manner as to divert his movements from a forward to a circular, clockwise direction.

A treasured photograph which Weeness mailed to her mother is now in my possession. This picture bears notations by Weeness identifying "Tommy's sand box," and "My chair where I sit and watch."

When the Burlington Railway's *Denver Zephyr* made its

first run westward across Nebraska, the entire Spence family drove out on the open prairie to watch it move across the landscape, presenting the appearance of an invading worm as it approached from a distance.

Once while seated in a beautician's chair, Weeness succombed to a proposal to invest ten cents in return for a chance on a turkey which was to be disposed of through the whim of the goddess of chance, a procedure known to the hoi polloi as a raffle. Several days later a messenger boy appeared at 722 East Ninth to deliver the aforesaid prize. This turned out to be a live turkey. After recovering from her initial consternation, Weeness enlisted the aid of Miss Wood, who commandeered the assistance of a college student. Through the joint efforts of the three, all difficulty was resolved. I rebuked the winner for her part in the questionable proceedings, but joined heartily in the eating of the turkey.

We did not remain in Hastings during the summer vacation periods, retreating to areas of less extreme heat as represented by Virginia and North Carolina; and were thus spared doing combat with that of Nebraska. These were, of course, the days before homes were air conditioned. The Nebraska winter weather was, from time to time, quite chilling, once during our stay reaching twenty degrees below zero. Several times in this period the thermometer dropped below zero and then simply neglected to rise for perhaps as much as a week at a time.

The 1930's were years of dust and depression, each vieing with the other in strenuous efforts to bring discomfort, disorder, and distress to the people of the state. Nebraska was a dry and thirsty land where very little water was to be found during the greater portion of this era. The legacy which the dust storms bequeathed to the Spence household came in the form of asthma contracted by Tommy. This affliction continued long after his removal from the West, and was of a decidedly serious nature until the discovery of certain modern remedies for its control.

The depression bore strange fruit in Nebraska and this was none the less true at Hastings College. Soon after it began, the institution dispensed with the services of a teacher in the department of education as an economy move. Thereupon, Dean F. E. Weyer wrote to me, then in the Southeast, asking if I were willing to teach a course in the history of education during the fall term and to follow this with one dealing with educational psychology in the spring. After stating that he and President French had discussed the matter, Dean Weyer emphasized the fact that such an arrangement would be purely temporary and that my choice as to assuming this responsibility was an entirely voluntary one. Those associated with educational institutions can appreciate that when the president and dean of a college combine to suggest that a member of the faculty undertake a particular work, the matter is certainly worthy of serious consideration. It received it.

Some acquaintance with the various facets of history led me to believe that the history of education might be presented in at least a passable manner. I did not know what educational psychology was, only being able to form some conclusions as to its content from the name which it bore.

A letter to Dean Weyer by way of acquiescence in realizing the proposed arrangement included a request for copies of the text books used in each of the subjects concerned. This was inspired by the belief that I might at least learn something of the nature of educational psychology, with the hope that sufficient familiarity might be acquired to enable me to face the class with some degree of confidence, however small.

The result of the affair was that I thoroughly enjoyed each of the courses and, though never broaching the matter to either the dean or the president, would have regretted to have been deprived of the teaching of either of the subjects. No such regrets ever came to be in order, since I continued as instructor in both the history of education and educational psychology

across the next seven years, terminating this association only upon my departure from the college. Were I still on the Hastings faculty at the age of seventy-eight, I might now be presenting these subjects to the grandchildren of my former students. However that may be, I have been and am continuing to be grateful to the college authorities for the enlightening experiences with the history of education, educational psychology, and those students who were subjected to the instruction of one who had received so little formal preparation for two courses for which I came to feel a genuine and growing affection with the passing of each succeeding year.

Prior to 1930 Hastings had been the site of a powerful radio station, installed before the days of relaying programs by wire came into practice. The town's location at the approximate center of the country had naturally led to its selection for the installation of such a transmitter. In our day the college program was broadcast from Station KMMJ at Clay Center, twenty-three miles away.

On one particular day when this program was scheduled to go on the air, the student in charge approached me with the annotated proposal, "Our program has gone bad on us, and we have to get someone who can fill in without preparation. Will you help us?" To this day the invited broadcaster has never been able to decide whether this was to be construed as a compliment or the reverse, though he did take part in the presentation of that afternoon with very little preparation.

Dean Weyer of the college apparently shared similar ideas to those of the programming student. For the last several years in Hastings, I acted as a semi-official substitute at chapel services, and was at times called upon at almost the last minute to fill in for some speaker or group who had failed to appear. Looking back across almost forty years in review of these experiences, it must be confessed that I really enjoyed being subject to such eleventh-hour notification. Life at Hastings was inspiring. It was a great place.

Weeness did little traveling during the years at Hastings except making the fifteen hundred mile trips between there and the Southeast. Those were times of depression when money was scarce and her children were small, while Tommy's asthmatic condition certainly did not tend to encourage such undertakings as lengthy journeys. Furthermore, centers which might have been chosen as objectives by travelers were relatively distant.

Living in Nebraska with summers spent in Virginia and North Carolina did bring certain peripheral bonuses. For example, Weeness was enabled to twice visit the Chicago Exposition of the 1930's, once as she traveled toward Richmond and again on her westward trip in the following fall. The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway was installing air conditioned sleeping cars at the time she first began to journey to the West. These sleepers continued on the Big Four Railway tracks from Cincinnati to St. Louis, and also from Cincinnati to Chicago. It was always necessary to change stations in Chicago, but in Omaha the Union Station and that of the Burlington Route were connected by a covered walkway. Trains in and out of St. Louis operated in an old, but very large union station. In any event, she acquired what might appropriately be termed a passing through knowledge of Cincinnati, Chicago, Omaha, and St. Louis.

In the spring of 1936 we purchased an automobile and for the next three years our East-West travels were largely by motor. These trips required four days, instead of the two spent on trains, but made progress much less exacting in a number of respects.

In spite of the interest earlier indicated in golf while in Scotland, and the location of a golf course just across the street from her Hastings home, Weeness seldom joined me in this game, rather devoting herself to her children and her home.

On the whole, the time passed rapidly at Hastings. We left Nebraska after nine years of association with the college, grateful for the experience of having lived as constituent parts of an

academic community, and appreciative of the friendships formed during that period of our lives. Weeness never returned to Nebraska, her later travels generally seeming to lead her in a different direction. My last visit to Hastings was in 1968. At that time almost all the familiar faces had gone, and the day spent there would have been a lonely one save for the unbounded hospitality of Hayes Fuhr and Mrs. Fuhr. Dr. Fuhr had long been head of the college's large and flourishing music department, and Mrs. Fuhr was a teacher of piano in the college. Both had retired by this time; and the couple showered such attention upon me as to make the visit a thoroughly delightful one. I had come none too soon. Mrs. Fuhr died soon afterwards, and Dr. Fuhr several years later.

The Hastings stay was in the nature of an interlude, nevertheless, a highly important and profitable one. We had come from the mountains (after a year in New York), and were now destined to return again to the hill country of Carolina. After five years in the pastorate and nine years devoted to teaching, I was now to engage in a work of a different, though related, nature. Interestingly enough, this was to be only sixty-four miles from Banner Elk.

O THY MOUNTAINS CAROLINA

O, thy mountains, Carolina—
Much there is for which to praise thee,
Much there is for which to love thee;
But thy mountains, Carolina,
When they raise themselves above thee,
Climbing from the fertile lowlands
Into summits wrapped in beauty,
Call thy children, Carolina,
From the limits of the distance.
Past the fringes of the oceans
Where the sailing ships with cargoes
Seek for ports on many waters,
Call thy sons from stretching moorlands
To return unto thy borders,
There to dwell where peaks ascending
Catch the early light of morning,
Or in silent twilight standing
Wear the purple hush of evening.
And no soul which knows thy glory
Rests until that call is heeded.

From *Westward across Nebraska.*

CHAPTER VI

The Montreat Years

"Rev. T. H. Spence, Banner Elk, N. C., & wife bring typewriter & work on thesis," reads an entry which Samuel Mills Tenney made in a small, black volume under the date of August 28, 1928. In this little book Dr. Tenney was accustomed to record the visits of those who came to Montreat to utilize the facilities of the newly organized Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States had constituted the Historical Foundation in 1927. Later in the same year, Dr. and Mrs. Tenney supervised the loading and moving of a railway box car filled with papers, books, and various other items of Presbyteriana from Texarkana, Texas, to Black Mountain, North Carolina, Montreat's freight station. Robert C. Anderson, president of the Mountain Retreat Association, ever alert for any development which might enhance the prestige and enlarge the usefulness of Montreat, had promised to provide housing for the Foundation.

When Weeness and I drove down from Banner Elk on that August day, a day which set in motion a chain of events which was to deeply influence our lives, we were in search of materials for a thesis by way of completion of work begun in Scotland two years earlier. The kindly reception accorded us by Dr. and Mrs. Tenney, who herself was the later recipient of a doctor's degree from Austin College, along with the sources discovered in the Foundation, did much to send the two of us back home with the conviction that the day had been a good and profitable one. We also judged that even more might be accomplished on

future visits to Montreat—much more than we could have imagined at that time.

Work as a research assistant was a new type of endeavor for Weeness, but one at which she proved herself adept. Nursing was by no means the only avenue open for the demonstration of her interests and her skill. There were additional days spent at Montreat and the Historical Foundation for similar study, and throughout the whole project she was a source of recurring inspiration to me.

Ten years after the first meeting with Dr. Tenney, the Spence family, by this time including Tommy and Maria, spent the month of July at Montreat with a view to my acquiring a general knowledge of the Historical Foundation. This followed correspondence and a meeting in the previous summer at which Dr. Tenney expressed his intention to retire as head of the institution and indicated his desire that I should succeed him in that position. The month was a profitable one in which we came to know each other the better, and it enabled me to gain some insight into the work and its prospects for the future. I returned to Hastings in the fall with the realization that the Foundation was looming large in our future.

With the somewhat sudden death of Dr. Tenney in 1939, I arrived in Montreat to discover that he had done little, if anything, by way of contacting the trustees of the Foundation in regard to his successor. The situation might well have been an embarrassing one, but the good offices of Mrs. Tenney and the probability that the board had no idea as to whom they might otherwise turn, resulted in my prompt installation as executive officer of the institution.

After reaching Montreat as a resident, I came into close contact with the remarkable man who had built the community into a renowned conference center. Dr. Anderson had left his pastorate at Gastonia, North Carolina, in 1911 to assume the leadership of the Mountain Retreat Association. In many re-

spects he was a pioneer, although Montreat had been in operation for some fourteen years before he became connected with it. The Historical Foundation was a separate entity, having no direct legal or ecclesiastical connection with the Association. As events were to determine and time was to demonstrate, the Foundation proved to be the Association's non-paying tenant for a period of twenty-seven years.

Another of the Church's leaders closely allied with the work of the Historical Foundation during the first six years of my association with it was Dr. Robert F. Campbell of Asheville, who served as chairman of the Executive Committee of the Foundation. Thus a friendship, begun sixteen years earlier at Banner Elk, was resumed immediately upon my arrival at Montreat.

When the Spence family first came to live at Montreat, we spent a short while at Assembly Inn. At this time the Inn presented an impressive appearance to incoming guests with what was literally a grand stairway rising from its ground level to the large lobby above. Facing new arrivals at the top of the stairs was a tremendous fireplace where a fire of logs burned throughout the day. From the Inn we moved to the home of Miss Sallie Liddell, on Mississippi Road, with the idea of remaining for a month while we located permanent quarters. Although the space at Miss Liddell's was somewhat restricted, we stayed there for three years before moving elsewhere.

A major problem marking these early months in the mountains was that growing out of Tommy's asthma. After a short while, Weeness and the two children spent several weeks at Locust Bend while her small son underwent a series of tests in Richmond. These were designed to discover the specific contacts which led to his attacks, with a view to providing a remedy. The result was marked alleviation of his illness.

In the early 1940's Weeness was subjected to two operations with satisfactory results, one of these being performed in Ashe-

ville and the second one in Richmond. Her general health during her earlier years at Montreat was good, though she found it necessary to place a limit upon the extent to which she engaged in strenuous activities.

Maria had not reached school age when our family moved to Montreat. In seasonable weather her mother frequently took her to what was popularly known as the Little Stream to play while her brother was in school. Tommy attended a school conducted at Montreat College during his first year in the community. After this both of the children rode on a county bus to Black Mountain where they were enrolled for the next nine years.

Early in the Montreat years the Spence family began making an annual Thanksgiving trip to Bristol, Tennessee, the home of Weeness's sister, Maria (Mrs. R. T. L.) Liston, whose husband served as president of King College. This arrangement grew out of the fact that the Liston boys, Bobby and Miller, were required to attend the Bristol city schools on the day following Thanksgiving, while the North Carolina schools always granted a holiday on Friday, as well as on Thursday, of that week.

As small children, Tommy and Maria found many attractions in the woods and streams of Montreat, and often played in these areas in the neighborhood of their home. Weeness secured a whistle for calling them to meals, as well as for summonsing them for other purposes.

She was quite competent at sewing and made many of Maria's clothes, not only during her daughter's younger years spent at Montreat, but later while Maria was in college. Weeness purchased a second-hand sewing machine in Richmond which she extensively utilized in this connection.

Locust Bend was the destination of a number of Christmas trips. One of these began after a deep snow, in fact two successive snows, had covered the ground; and we set out with the idea of experimenting with the highways and traveling just so far as these roads gave promise of permitting. On this journey

Christmas at Locust Bend, 1945

Seated: Bill McCoy, Margaret McCoy, Evelyn Holman, Mrs. Holman, Dr. Holman, Anne Hinckley, Ems Holman; Standing, Front Row: John Roberts, Maria Spence, Bill Roberts, Miller Liston, Elizabeth Spence, Katherine Holman, Mary Curd, Bobby Liston, Bob Liston; Back Row: Sally Roberts, Maria Liston, Tommy Spence, Mary Holman Curd, William Curd, Thomas H. Spence, Jr.

Boarding the *United States*, 1956
Thomas H. Spence, Jr., Ems Holman, and Elizabeth Spence

we were apparently the first to venture down the persistently winding road between Ridgecrest and Old Fort. It was a hectic day, but the early hours of night found us at Locust Bend, ready to join in the customary celebration that had long characterized the season at the Holman home.

After three years at Miss Liddell's house, we moved down the hill to Assembly Drive and into the former home of Mrs. J. C. Tait. It was a comfortably large building, now a part of the complex comprising the Montreat offices of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Mrs. Tait, together with her daughters Edith and Irene, made up the family residing in the adjoining part of what was really a duplex building; while a third daughter, Jean, was at home for a portion of the seven year period during which we lived there. The Taits and their near neighbors soon began a firm and lasting friendship which continued down through the years after we had moved into a home of our own. Edith Tait took special interest in Tommy and initiated him into the mysteries of the various photographic processes in which she was well versed.

Mrs. Pearl Jones of Meridian, Mississippi, occupied the house to the west of ours in the summer and fall months, and was a welcome addition by way of fellowship during this portion of the year. Her granddaughter, Jackie Hopkins, and Maria spent much time together during the prolonged visits which Jackie made each year to Montreat.

The very much younger set of these earlier years, with whom the Spence children were associated, included George Belk, Clayton Bell, the three Wilsons—Betsy, Dannie, and Susanne, Nick (Edwin) and John Neville, and Marylin Matthews. Billy Hood, together with Marshall and Fred Doggett, augmented this group in the war years of the 1940's while their fathers were serving in the chaplaincy. A cave near Assembly Inn, the Haunted House, and Skull Swamp were among the sites frequently selected for rendezvous, thus adding a Tom Sawyer

and Huck Finn tang to local life. The Big Stream (Flat Creek) and the Little Stream (Little Piney Branch) were favorites for aquatic activities.

In the early 1940's, Weeness's sister, Sally (Mrs. John K. Roberts) and her husband purchased a cottage in Montreat at the junction of Virginia Road and Louisiana Avenue, bearing the felicitous name of Happy Hut. The summer occupancy of this resort was to add greatly to the dimensions of the life of the Spence family in the years to follow. Since John and Bill Roberts were cousin-contemporaries of Tommy and Maria, their presence provided substantial additions to those of their age group in Montreat in the summer months.

James Guerrant Holman, Weeness's half-brother, who managed the farm of Locust Bend, died on September 21, 1945. This was the first death in her immediate family.

In 1949 C. M. Hutton of Minden, Louisiana, whose family spent their summers in an impressive house on Virginia Road across from Happy Hut, indicated to Jack Roberts that he would be willing to part with a building site immediately across the road from his home and adjoining Happy Hut. This was made up of the rear portions of two lots which faced Louisiana Avenue and which Mr. Hutton had bought during the depression years at a cost of six hundred dollars. After obtaining the property he erected a hundred feet of stone retaining wall along a portion of its boundries and filled in the lower portion with a number of loads of dirt. Upon being contacted in this connection, Mr. Hutton affirmed his willingness to sell the lot, told of how he had secured it, and set the price at the figure of six hundred dollars which he originally spent for the land which he had so visibly improved.

Under the direction of William C. Green of Black Mountain, Weeness and I saw work begin on our new home in 1949. The plans, formulated in conjunction with Mr. Green, called for a first floor of a living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom and

study, with two rooms on the second floor. The house was ready for occupancy early in the following year, and we moved into the sturdily built and attractive cottage at the end of January of 1950.

This home was—certainly in the eyes of Weeness—appropriately located on Virginia Road. Locust Bend was neither forgotten nor were mementoes of her birthplace lacking in these new surroundings. In the yard she planted shrubs and flowers which had grown around her childhood home, and one bush, in accumulated ancestry, ran back in line to her father's early Virginia home. Her dining room table, chairs, and china press were made by her uncle, Thomas Holman, from wood from timber cut in the forests of her father's farm.

She planted the staunch evergreens, which have long since grown into trees and which shield the house from the road, with her own hands, after she and Jane (Mrs. Ira D.) Holt had procured them as small seedlings from the slopes higher up the mountains. When several of these original plantings died, she promptly replaced them with deciduous sprouts which were readily obtainable. She and Jane Holt were friends across the years, and their friendship has been continued by their daughters, Jane Holt, Jr., and Maria Spence Thomas.

Weeness often sat on the stone wall between Virginia Road and her home during the summer and fall months. It was from this home that her children went away to college and, later, to be married; and here they brought her grandchildren by way of blessed benediction. This was the house which she loved and in which she lived until that July day in 1971 when the increasing impact of Parkinson's Disease impelled her hospitalization and later withdrawal to a nursing home. Even then she continued to make brief visits to it of one, or two, or three days duration, the last of these taking place at Christmas of 1975.

Surely the most difficult of partings with her children must have been that of January, 1953, when she said goodbye to

Tommy as he left to rejoin the 7th Marines for the battlefield in Korea. There he fought through the last six months of the war with one of the most effective combat units of all time, an aggregation that has always seemed adequately aware of its capabilities. He returned safely from the Orient and his mother, who had borne his absence with a fortitude which deeply impressed her husband, welcomed him in January of 1954, with thanksgiving, as an answer to her prayers. The only collection of letters which she continued to preserve intact was that composed of those written by Tommy while he was a member of the Marine Corps.

The removal to Virginia Road brought Weeness into closer contact with the residents of that Montreat neighborhood. Already a close friendship had developed with Peggy (Mrs. John C.) Neville, who lived between the Assembly Drive house of the Taits and Virginia Road. The T. E. Nelsons' summer home was located on one side of the Spence lot; and Mrs. Nelson, after the death of her husband, built a cottage on Virginia Road. Just beyond lived Mrs. J. C. Haw and Miss Margaret Davis; and somewhat later Dr. Nettie Grier and her daughters, Mrs. Isabel Woods and Lucy, joined the fellowship of the immediate community. Another member of that household, Donny Woods, and Tommy became devoted friends. Mr. and Mrs. Hutton and their family, as has been noted, were across Virginia Road during the summer season, as was true of George Norris and his daughter, Grace, who occupied a house adjoining the Huttons'. The Arthur Links of Princeton, New Jersey, were added to the immediate summer colony somewhat later, as they built a house beside Happy Hut. The A. A. McLeans, who had spent their summers in a home just beyond Happy Hut, retired to Montreat in 1954 and their year-round residency proved a happy addition for their neighbors. The Stephen Bardens—Mrs. Barden was formerly Edith McLean—later entered the

circle of neighbor-friends when they moved into the McLean house as permanent residents.

For a period of eighteen months (1944–1946), I acted as supply pastor of the Montreat Presbyterian Church in the absence of a regular minister. For several months of this time Weeness was chairman of the circle charged with the responsibility of providing flowers for the church each Sunday. Every Saturday afternoon of this period found the two of us at Gaither Chapel, happily active in arranging the flowers for the worship service of the following day.

A popular diversion for Saturday afternoon was that of an outing with the children. This frequently took the form of a drive to Asheville, perhaps two hours in a picture show—pictures were different in those days—with a western movie on the screen, and supper at the S. and W. Cafeteria. Another point of Saturday P.M. interest was Point Lookout, a sort of way station on one of the almost countless curves of the swiftly descending road between Ridgecrest and Old Fort. This was the first place in my memory to charge as much as ten cents for a bottle of Coca-cola, and one which I saw pass from the mountain scene with nostalgic regret upon the completion of a new and modern road to displace the older one on which it stood.

Dr. Holman lived in the Richmond house to which he moved in October of 1946 until his death on February 22, 1947. He was buried in Holywood Cemetery at Richmond. Mrs. Holman survived him for a number of years, her death taking place on February 22, 1966. Evelyn Holman resided with her parents, continuing to live at 1826 Grove Avenue until her death on October 18, 1972.

After the removal of Dr. and Mrs. Holman to Richmond, their home in that city naturally became the focal point of Holman affairs. Even after their deaths, it continued as the family

center, serving as such until Evelyn's death and the subsequent sale of the house.

Mrs. Andrew Snead, invariably known as Lois at Locust Bend during its last two decades, came with the Holmans to serve as cook at the Grove Avenue house. She continues in the same capacity with the William Curds in their Richmond home.

In 1950 both Tommy and Maria ended their association with the Black Mountain High School, where Tommy served as president of the student council during his senior year. Tommy graduated at the 1950 commencement, while Maria transferred to Montreat School for Girls, operated at that time in connection with Montreat College. Tommy entered King College in the fall of that year. He remained at King for only a brief time, enlisting in the Marine Corps after the end of his first semester. The Marine's examining physician first rejected him on account of his asthma, but Tommy's persistence prevailed as he talked over the matter with the doctor, who proved amenable to conviction and, thereupon, certified him for enlistment.

After the usual basic routine at Parris Island, South Carolina, for eight weeks, he moved to Camp Lejeune for about two months. His next station was the electronics school at Great Lakes, Illinois, followed by advanced training in electronics at the Marine Base at San Diego, California. Then he was stationed at Camp Lejeune again. Finally becoming tired of the relative inactivity there, he volunteered for overseas duty, and was sent to Camp Pendleton in California for combat instruction, and then shipped to Korea.

The Spences and the Listons, whose son, Bobby, had entered the Marines slightly ahead of Tommy, visited their sons at Parris Island at Easter in 1952. We followed this with a trip to Lejeune and another to the Great Lakes base after Tommy had been transferred to the latter station. On each of these three occasions, Maria was a member of the party of travelers.

When Tommy reached Korea, his cousin, Bobby Liston, who

had earlier reached that country, came out to help him unload his belongings. Both of them occupied the same tent, and Donald Jackson, a former schoolmate of Tommy's at Black Mountain, was also stationed at the same base.

In the meantime, I had been occupied with plans for erecting a building for the Historical Foundation. Up to this time the holdings of the Foundation had been housed on the ground floor of Assembly Inn through the courtesy of the Mountain Retreat Association. This area was quite suitable, but the collections of the institution had grown to such a point as to render it entirely inadequate from the standpoint of space. Two major propositions were before the Foundation board and its director, the securing of the necessary funds for the construction of an adequate building and the preparation of appropriate plans for its erection. Each of these was soon forthcoming, and the new Foundation home was partially occupied in December of 1953 and fully so by the following summer.

During her senior year at Montreat School for Girls (1952–1953), Maria roomed in a building set aside for the occupancy of high school girls and, rather confusingly, known at that time as College Hall. After her graduation she followed the example of her brother and enrolled at King College, entering in the fall of 1953. After his discharge from the Marines in early 1954, Tommy immediately reentered King, reaching home on Friday of one week and leaving for Bristol on the following Monday. By attending one summer school at the University of Richmond, he managed to graduate from King without undue loss of time, completing his work at the end of the summer of 1956. During the second semester of her senior year at King, Maria was scheduled to do practice teaching in the Bristol city schools. Due to the shortage of teachers, she worked on a regular basis and received compensation for her services.

She spent the following academic year as a teacher in the Southwest High School in Atlanta, Georgia. Here she was

happy in her work but declined an invitation to return for the next school year, having chosen another field with many more attractions than could possibly be offered in the world of education.

In 1946 the Charles D. Thomas family settled at Black Mountain, as Dr. Thomas became the head of the Western North Carolina Sanitorium for the treatment of tuberculosis. This group consisted of, not only Dr. and Mrs. Thomas, but included two sons, Charles, Jr., and Ray. Charles was about Tommy's age and the two became friends at the Black Mountain High School. With the passage of some time, his interest in the Spence family began to broaden to include Tommy's sister.

After two years at Darlington School in Rome, Georgia, Charlie entered Purdue University at Lafayette, Indiana, to pursue an engineering course. Following three years at Purdue, where he was a member of the Sigma Nu fraternity, he enlisted in the United States Air Force. While Maria was teaching in Atlanta he was stationed at Big Spring, Texas, and, not infrequently, found occasion to visit the Georgia Capital.

On November 15, 1958, he and Maria were married in Gaither Chapel at Montreat, with the bride's Uncle, Jack Roberts, performing the ceremony. Miss Elizabeth Hoyt, a member of the Montreat College faculty, had a large part in the preparations for the wedding. Following a reception held at Assembly Inn, the couple left for a honeymoon spent on their leisurely drive to Big Spring.

Weeness's first grandchild, Charles Darwin Thomas, III, was born at Big Spring on November 7, 1959. On his first trip to Montreat in the following spring, he appeared dressed in a cowboy outfit, as befitted his prerogative as a native Texan.

Upon the completion of his work at King, Tommy entered the School of Law of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, graduating on June 1, 1959, at exercises attended by his father and mother. While he was at Chapel Hill, we had

frequently found opportunity to visit him. This trip brought with it the privilege of staying at the Carolina Inn, located near the University campus, which we considered, along with the Holiday Inn at Greenwood, South Carolina, the Taft Hotel in New York, and the Piedmont Hotel in Atlanta, outstanding with regard to buys in their field.

After his graduation in law, Tommy worked for a short time at the Historical Foundation, spent some months with the Aetna Insurance Company, and, in 1963, embarked upon the private practice of law in Concord, North Carolina.

While with the Aetna organization, he was stationed for a short time in Birmingham, Alabama. This was sufficient for him to make the acquaintance of Ann Warren Henderson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Henderson of that city. Tommy and Ann Warren were married in the Shades Valley Presbyterian Church of Birmingham on October 6, 1962, with the pastor, Thomas Duncan, and the father of the groom officiating. The couple spent their honeymoon at Montreat, the senior Spences leaving for a visit elsewhere during this time.

Ann Warren is a native of Birmingham and a graduate of Howard College (now Samford University) which is located in Birmingham. After her children entered school, she enrolled in the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, only a half mile from her home, from which she received the degree of Master of Arts in 1976.

Among those entering the family picture about 1960 was Mrs. Roy Wilkins, affectionately known by all the Spence connection as Oda Lee. She came each week to have a part in the cleaning of the house and a mutual and lasting attachment developed between Weeness and her. Oda Lee is the wife of Roy Wilkins whom Tommy, as a small boy, devotedly followed around Assembly Inn in the days immediately after our arrival in Montreat.

Weeness at times gave evidence of definite partianship, espe-

cially when such an attitude concerned her grandchildren. One particular day in Valdosta, Georgia, while visiting Maria's household, she permitted the very youthful Chuckie Thomas to crowd close to her on the back seat of a car while he ate graham crackers which had been previously proscribed by his mother. At another time she carefully removed the marks of crayons from a bathroom wall after Chuckie, who had selected that spot for his drawings, remarked to her, "They'll tan my hide for this." Needless to say, she had no desire to have such corrective measures applied to her grandson.

Another episode at Valdosta ended in dismay, at least temporarily so. Having purchased for Chuckie a very attractive pair of red slippers, Weeness bought a little toy for his sister, Lizzie, in order that the younger Thomas might not feel overlooked. But wearing apparel of any nature, quality, or appearance was not considered to be on the same plane as a toy. Chuckie was profoundly disappointed upon the presentation of the two gifts, and gave vehement expression to his feelings with the rhetorical query, "Grandmother, how could you!" It is probably unnecessary to add that Grandmother immediately returned to downtown Valdosta to secure the kind of present which she had thus been taught was acceptable.

Weeness also demonstrated on more than one occasion a remarkable aptitude for "persuading" her husband to purchase such articles as she judged to be desirable or which she especially desired. I once explained to her in my able, and what should have been thoroughly convincing, manner that the upholstery on a chair under consideration was of such poor quality as to make its purchase unwise. After the conclusion of this discourse, she turned to me and said, "If you don't get it, I'll buy it." The reader will judge correctly if he or she concludes that I bought the article under consideration without further ado whatsoever. The chair is now in the Spence living room, adorned with a very attractive and durable upholstery which I flatter myself

Thomas Kirkpatrick Spence

Ann Henderson Spence

At Home on Virginia Road, 1962

as having selected—I was entirely correct as to the lasting qualities of the original covering.

The scene now shifts from Black Mountain, where the affair relating to the chair took place, to her mother's home in Richmond. In the course of a visit to that city, there was some consideration of the possible acquisition of a specific set of china. I reminded her that we were quite well supplied with such tableware, and considered that the discussion had ended. It had. Several days later I sat down to a meal and was immediately struck by the fact that before me was a complete place setting in an elegant pattern of china. Weeness thereupon both opened and closed consideration of the matter with, "We can get either this or another design I have selected down town." The incident largely explains why the Spence china press is filled to overflowing even unto this late day and hour.

Several times Weeness accompanied me to meetings of the General Assembly which were held outside of Montreat. In 1951 we met Maria Liston and Sally Roberts with their commissioner husbands and children at such a convocation in Orlando, Florida. Each of the families secured an apartment in the same building, thus making possible a mini Holman reunion during the Assembly sessions. A visit to the Charlotte, North Carolina, Assembly of 1958 afforded her an opportunity for seeing a number of friends in that area. In 1955, Maria, Sally, and Weeness joined their two sisters making their homes in Richmond, Mary and Evelyn, as the General Assembly met in Virginia's capital city.

Among her longer trips by automobile of later years was that made in 1963 as she and I, after attending a meeting in Atlanta, moved on to Mobile, Alabama, for a visit with Tommy and Ann Warren. The drive back was made by way of Valdosta, Georgia, for a stay with Maria's family.

The most lengthy of such journeys led to Homestead in the south of Florida in 1966. Here the Thomases were stationed

preparatory to Charlie's departure to Vietnam for a year's service. This gave Weeness an opportunity to tour Miami for the first time, as well as other parts of the state below the Singing Tower, the most southernly Florida point which she had previously reached.

Tommy and Ann Warren moved to North Carolina in 1963. They eventually settled at Charlotte, two and a half hours' drive from Montreat, and frequently came up for weekends, leaving home in the early evening and having supper at Bridge's Barbecue at Shelby. Two adopted sons, Thomas Hugh Spence, III, born August 11, 1967, and Mark Henderson Spence, born January 8, 1970, have proved a great blessing in their home.

Pronounced breaks in the later years came in the form of excursions which Weeness made to Europe with me as my duties led there in search of Presbyterian and Reformed materials for the Historical Foundation. The fact that accessible sources for such books centered in certain areas resulted in repeated visits to the cities of Edinburgh, Belfast, London, Cambridge, Paris, Geneva, Torre Pellice, Rome, and Amsterdam. It now strikes me as strange that no effort was made to contact the Reformed Church in Hungary during these travels.

An increasing familiarity on the part of Weeness with these places was both the natural and actual result of the retracing of our steps in the course of our travels with recurring frequency. The opportunity of coming to know these cities which was thus presented to her eventuated in a much fuller acquaintance than that acquired by the member of an average touring party.

She was constantly mindful of the intent behind these several overseas trips in which she joined, and readily accommodated herself to the necessities imposed by their purposes. This ready cooperation went far toward making these travels events of both satisfaction and enjoyment for both of us. With the exception of that spent in moving from place to place, her time was essentially her own. The fact that on three of the four expeditions of

1956 and the 1960's, one or another of her sisters accompanied her made the journeys much more pleasurable and tended to widen the scope of local excursions in and around the places visited. This also afforded her companionship during the hours when I cared for the business of searching out and purchasing Presbyterian and Reformed publications.

When the *United States*, the speediest of all the great trans-Atlantic ships, sailed from New York at noon on March 22, 1956, the two Spences and Ems Holman were among the tourist class passengers on board. The *United States* was a vessel of 53,-330 tons, the largest on which we had taken passage up to that time; and its promoters were unabashedly boastful of its almost entire construction of metal. Since it was necessary to have two sittings for meals in order to accommodate the passengers, we decided that it would be best for us to select the first, or earlier one, with servings at 8, 12, and 6. The ship gave prompt evidence of its reputation for speed. The food was delicious; the stateroom was excellent; and the voyage was largely characterized by a calm sea.

Leaving the ship at Southampton at 7:30 on the evening of Tuesday, March the 27th, we found the traditional British boat train waiting at the docks and were in London before much time had passed. Here I had difficulty in locating a hotel, making a number of phone calls from Waterloo Station for this purpose, and discovering that only three large pennies—not a single 3d piece—would suffice to activate the phones. These calls were made to the accompaniment of certain remarks by the ladies relative to the judiciousness of anyone who would knowingly reach London between the hours of nine and ten at night without having previously arranged for lodgings. Perseverance triumphed, however, and we thereafter found ourselves at the Imperial Hotel in the Russell Square section of the city. The Imperial proved to be a large and old structure of 650 rooms, and was a fascinating place from several standpoints. One of its fea-

tures, not to be overlooked, was the reasonableness of its rates.

We discovered that almost everything in London closed on Good Friday, the third day after our arrival, and decided to seek out such sights as might be found in Canterbury. Accordingly we reenacted the age-old Chaucerian pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas à Becket, traveling by British Railways, however, rather than by horse; setting out from Charing Cross Station, in lieu of departure from the Tabard Inn; and indicating more concern with Canterbury in general and the Cathedral in particular, than with that specific spot where the unfortunate archbishop was slain.

Tennyson must surely have had Canterbury in mind when he wrote of "ancient kings who did their days in stone." After leaving the train at the West Station, and having lunch at the Falstaff Hotel, originally built to accommodate pilgrims who reached that spot too late at night to gain admittance through the great West Gate of the city, we walked to the cathedral, the headquarters of the Anglican Church. Within was a listing of the names of that church's long line of archbishops, inscribed on a wall of the building; and beginning with St. Augustine who landed in 597.

On three successive days we visited as many of the great churches of Christendom—Canterbury on Friday; Westminster Abbey, denominated by Dr. Walter W. Moore in his *Year in Europe* as "the most interesting building in the world," on the following day; and St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday. We attended services at Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's in these connections.

Among the unexpected treats on this visit to Westminster Abbey was a tour of the Jerusalem Chamber of that venerable edifice conducted by no less person than the distinguished Alan Don, Dean of the Abbey, himself. This came after the service alluded to above, and following an inquiry made to one of the Abbey vergers regarding the possibility of obtaining the permit

necessary to enter that Chamber. Several minutes after the making of this inquiry, the verger to whom it had been addressed pointed out the Dean who was standing nearby, and suggested that this official might give such permission if approached at that time. Dean Don did much more than this, responding to the request with the entirely unexpected offer, "I will be glad to take you through myself."

He thereupon led his guests across the Jericho Parlour of the Abbey and on into the Jerusalem Chamber, all the while giving a revealing account of the proceedings which took place in that commodious room just before the middle of the Seventeenth Century. It was here and then that the Assembly of Divines drew up the articles of faith, worship, and government of the Presbyterian Church.

A later visit to the Abbey in 1968 disclosed a marble tablet, set in the floor of the nave, in the same general area as those honoring David Livingstone, the British Unknown Soldier, and Winston Churchill, which memorialized our delightful host and gracious guide of twelve years before.

In 1956 we found that the library of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England was a sort of refugee from the aftermath of bombings, located in the basement of the Marylebone Presbyterian Church in London. Through the interests of Miss Lillian W. Kelley, the librarian and archivist of the Society, this institution proved to be the chief London contributor to the holdings of the Historical Foundation at this time.

On Wednesday of the week following our arrival in London, we left for Paris over the Dover to Calais sea route which, as was earlier noted, had been avoided in 1927 because of its cost. The hotel selected in Paris turned out to be only passable, but of sufficient quality for Weeness and Ems to remain there while I made a two-day trip to Geneva in what proved to be a successful quest of materials.

A Sunday spent in Paris found us at the morning service of

the Scottish Church where we heard an unusual prayer. Here a young minister from Scotland petitioned the Lord to make the beliefs of the congregation be in accord with the findings of modern science.

Return to London followed a short stay in Paris. Here we went by the London underground (subway) to Baker street and the haunts of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. Whereupon I took three successive photographs which proved convincingly, to my satisfaction at any rate, that the two were still alive, busily engaged in the same activities which had made Holmes such a scourge of the London criminal element of a half-century before.

The trip which we made from London to Edinburgh was a speedy one, thanks to the *Flying Scotsman;* and we reached the Scottish capital at 5:30 in the afternoon. The Montreat duo—Ems had remained in London for another day or two—registered at the North British Hotel and were assigned to a room looking out over the whole length of Princes Street, with the Castle forming the end of the vista in the left distance. In the hotel dining room we were introduced to a shining example of the gradation of authority, as the head waiter exercised such sway over the waiters who, in turn, commanded the women serving the tables, while the latter spoke with a like expectation of being obeyed to the bus boys. Since breakfast was included in the charge for our room, we regularly took our first meal of the day in the dining room of the hotel, but found lunch and dinner there to be overly expensive.

Again, after a lapse of twenty-nine years, Weeness renewed her friendship with Cathy Reid in person, and once more enjoyed fellowship with Peggy Blakeley, from whom we learned that Mrs. Blakeley had died in 1943. An evening for high tea at the Reid home gave us an opportunity for conversing with Mrs. Reid, then eighty-five years of age. Mr. Reid's death had occurred in 1954, after he and his family had moved to Edin-

burgh upon his retirement from his Dunfermline charge at St. John's Church, the name assumed by the North United Free Church following the union of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church in 1929.

I went to Belfast for a two-day visit to book dealers in that center of Irish Presbyterianism and, at the same time, made a number of valuable contacts with officials of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland.

Weeness requested the house physician of the hotel to call at the time of his regular visitation in order that she might obtain a prescription for Dramamine, since such authorization was necessary for its purchase in Britain, though not required in France. After he had suggested a less expensive substitute—probably Quells—she inquired as to his charges. He replied that there were none, but finally agreed to accept a half-crown —less than fifty cents.

We spent a weekend in Dunfermline and attended worship at St. John's Church where I had been assistant minister about thirty years earlier. Here we saw a very few friends of the 1920's and later in the day called at the James Davidsons' for tea. On Monday we returned to Edinburgh on a morning train, but not before we had enjoyed a taxi ride to the Canmore golf course, 39 Castle Blair Park, the Abbey, and the Glen.

Once more the London bound *Flying Scotsman* was requisitioned—at least two of its seats—to take us back to London. On May the 9th we boarded the *Mauretania* at Southampton and set out for New York. On this voyage the ship called for two hours at the South Irish port of Cobh, where Weeness had her first and last sight of the fields and shoreline of the Irish Republic. Here a group of colleens and lads came on board for a trip to the United States, along with a large lot of Irish whiskey. The following morning I experienced my only case of seasickness and came to appreciate the plight of those plagued by this abominable affliction. I found quick and effective relief in

Quells, however, and never missed a meal on the way to New York.

After Charlie and Maria Thomas had moved from Big Spring, Texas, to Valdosta, Georgia, Maria's second child and namesake of the central figure of this narrative, Elizabeth Holman Thomas, was born on July 29, 1962. Grandmother Spence was soon in Valdosta, both to see the new arrival and to help Maria in caring for our only granddaughter.

The business of the Historical Foundation required its director to make periodic trips to Atlanta, as this city had become the headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Foundation's parent body. Since Weeness's sister Margaret (Mrs. Henry P. McCoy) lived in nearby Decatur, Weeness frequently accompanied me on these journeys after the children had left home. Such visits on her part became the even more alluring where either Tommy or Maria was temporarily living in Atlanta.

One of the Saturday afternoon diversions in which Weeness engaged at Montreat was the gathering with friends for playing the game of Rook. Mrs. W. J. Gammon, Mrs. L. Nelson Bell, Mrs. W. F. McElroy, Mrs. R. T. Coit, Miss Sallie Liddell, Mrs. Grace Lee, and Miss Claudia Edwards were among those frequently found enjoying this pastime at the end of the week.

The first break in the ranks of the Holman sisters came on October 18, 1957, with the death of Maria (Mrs. R. T. L. Liston). Since she and Weeness were particularly close, this could not but move her deeply.

On March 2, 1962, Weeness and I again sailed for Europe on the 81,237 ton *Queen Mary*. Our cabin class stateroom on this ship was quite desirable. What was advertised as the Protestant church service, held on our second day at sea, began somewhat strangely with the playing of the Ave Maria. On the following day the vessel was moving along at 29 knots an hour, though rough seas seemed to be the order of this voyage. Cabin class

On Board the *Queen Elizabeth*, 1962

With Chuckie, 1965

Beside Husband's Portrait
At the 1964 General Assembly

was far from filled on this trip, requiring only one sitting in the dining salon, with meals at 8–10, 1, and 7:30.

After anchoring in the harbor at Cherbourg for the disembarkation of passengers, the *Queen Mary* reached the Spithead in the late afternoon of Thursday, March 8th, where the ship anchored and awaited a favorable tide. It docked at Southampton about midnight. Early the next morning we went on to London and registered at the Tavistock Hotel. Here accommodations had been reserved by mail before leaving the United States, one member of our party of two having certain lingering recollections of comments overheard from his companions as to the wisdom of taking this precaution six years before. During her time in London, Weeness made her first visit to Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum and attended services at the Regent Square Presbyterian Church.

On the following day we left for Amsterdam by way of Harwich and the Hook of Holland. The trip of just over one hundred miles across the North Sea on the new, 6,200 ton *Queen Wilhelmina* was one of continuing and changing interest, with many boats in sight much of the time. At 8:30 P.M. our train reached the Central Station in Amsterdam.

Probably ranking with the most efficient institutions of its kind to be found in the Netherlands or elsewhere, for that matter, is the visitors' bureau in that railway station. This agency immediately reserves rooms at the various Amsterdam hotels for incoming travelers at a very nominal fee. A member of our party on a later trip learned that the bureau claimed to have never in its history failed to locate some place where the applicant might lodge for the night. Weeness and I made use of the services of this competent facility on each of our three stops at Amsterdam.

After a night spent at the Centraal Hotel, we found that snow had fallen since our arrival and that the cold was sufficient to freeze a skim of ice on many of the canals of the city. Our most

surprising reaction to Amsterdam was the great number of canals and the bridges which spanned these waterways.

Among the premier attractions of Amsterdam is the Rijks museum, and here, among many works of art, we saw the famous Rembrandt painting popularly, if not technically, known as the Night Watch.

One distinctive of the Centraal Hotel involved the large, green, wooden pears attached to the room keys, a device guaranteed to effectively discourage any guest from putting the key in his pocket and leaving the hotel with it upon his departure. The second was the inclusion of a generous slice of Dutch cheese with its continental breakfast.

Upon leaving Amsterdam for an overnight trip to Milan, Italy, Weeness had the first of her three experiences with a European sleeping car. We awoke as the train approached Como, with its beautiful lake, and were soon in Milan. Here our breakfast consisted largely of ham sandwiches, for it had already become apparent that not everyone in Italy understood English. We were then off to see one of the world's best known paintings, Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. We actually arrived before the refectory, where the picture was painted as a fresco upon the wall of this dining hall, had opened for the day. Afterwards we drove by the Milan cathedral, and then to the railway station and took a train for Turin, the home of Fiat automobiles. There we took a train for Torre Pellice, the Waldensian center thirty-five miles away.

An hour's ride brought us to Torre, and Torre was in the Valleys of the Waldenses, redolent with the records of one of the oldest branches of the Reformed family of churches. It was early spring (March 17th) and the high mountains to the west, which marked the French frontier, were still heavily covered with snow, traces of which were visible even in the town itself. If ever a place bore the marks of an ecclesiastical body, Torre was that place. There was the orphanage, the bookstore, the

museum, a college for the youth of the community and the Valleys, the synod hall, the church, the home for the college professors, the deaconess' home, and the hospital. Inhabited by a people intermittently harassed for several centuries by fire and sword, it lay in all its fulness and fascination for any Presbyterian with a sense of history or a knowledge of what had transpired in that region in which it stood as a center. The soil of the Waldensian Valleys has repeatedly been compared to that on which Moses stood when he was enjoined to put his shoes from off his feet, since he stood on holy ground. Events associated with Vandalino, a rocky peak rising conspicuously to the west of the town, was the site of such martyrdoms as described by Milton in his sonnet, "On the late massacre in Piedmont."

It was a refreshing and inspiring stay with Mr. and Mrs. Michelin, who installed their unexpected guests in an apartment, since their Parc Hotel was not yet in operation for the season. The two Misses Tron, one of whom was associated with the Claudiana Press and the Torre bookstore, arranged trips out of the community for us, and combined to make our time in their town both productive and pleasant.

On Sunday we joined with the people of the community as they worshipped in their twin-towered church. Here Weeness was present at her first service conducted in the Italian language. On the following day we visited two of the churches near Torre and met Madame Edoardo Aimé at Villa Pellice, and Madame Enrico Geymet at nearby Bobbio, each of whom was the wife of the pastor in their respective communities. Characteristic of the Waldensian church buildings are the Scripture verses painted on the walls, both outside and inside the building; and the open Bibles placed before the large pulpits of the structures.

After leaving Torre Pellice, we set out for Florence, passing through Genoa and changing trains at Pisa, but reserving a look at this city's Leaning Tower for another day, or rather, another year.

Among the highlights of our time in Florence was a morning spent in the Uffizi Gallery with its bewildering array of works of art. The cathedral and baptistery, resplendent with its glorious bronze doors, were among the other sights of the city which captured the attention of Weeness. But the time spent in Florence was brief, for there were no such ties with the Reformed Church here as those of other centers, though it had once been the seat of the theological seminary of the Waldensian Church. Accordingly, we soon moved on to Rome.

It was night when the train pulled into the great, modern railway station that stands as a kind of monument to the strident and ill fated Mussolini; but the station stood in Rome, Lord Byron's "City of the soul." It was a long distance both by land and sea from Locust Bend, but well worth all that had been required to reach it. The Caesars had long since departed but their monuments still remained. Rome, as any visitor can testify, is literally alive with the relics of the dead.

Nor is Rome solely of antiquarian interest to those of the Reformed Faith. It is the official headquarters of the Waldensian Church, since the office of its Moderator and Clerk—the two positions are filled by one person—is located here. In addition, the city is the seat of the church's theological seminary with its attractive library. This was found to be a rich source of Waldensiana. It later contributed extensively to the Foundation's collections of such materials.

It was a thrilling four days spent in the city presumptuously called eternal. St. Peter's, with a trip to the roof of this world famous church; the Sistine Chapel; the Church of St. Peter in Chains, with the chains said to have been those which bound Peter during his imprisonment, and Michelangelo's tremendous statue of Moses; the Forum with its reflection of the "glory that was Rome"; and the never to be forgotten Colosseum, gaunt in form standing against the Italian sky as a memento of man's inhumanity to man, to beasts, and to those heroic followers of the

Christ, who, like that protomartyr of Holy Writ, "climbed the steep ascent to heaven," with a cross now standing where the crowds once gathered for the sadistic making of a Roman holiday—all these we saw during this visit.

A hurried trip to Naples presented the opportunity for a half-day excursion to Pompeii, one European locality which Weeness had previously indicated a special desire to visit. The seats on the train between Rome and Naples were wooden benches, but the surroundings without and the passengers within the car were of such interest as to make the traveler forget incidental matters, including the nature of his or her seat. Each of us was surprised at the extent to which the excavation at Pompeii had been carried, and we were thrilled at the insight into the life of its citizens of the year 79 A.D., as reflected by the remains before us. The removal of the volcanic ash, which had covered the place of some twenty thousand inhabitants, revealed much of what was actually taking place in that distant year in this far away place.

The guide for our party had evidently failed to acquaint himself with the advertising folder describing the bus trip from Naples to Pompeii and return, with its assurance that the charge was an inclusive one, covering tips as well as transportation. As the returning bus neared Naples, he solicited every passenger, person by person, in the interests of his own pocketbook. Of course, he, like Weeness, might not have been able to read Italian. But guide or no guide, tips or not tips, the sight of Pompeii was highly interesting and equally instructive.

Another overnight trip brought us to Geneva, by way of the upper valley of the Rhone River, where we secured accommodations at the Hotel Bergues, the most luxurious of such hostelries which we patronized in Europe. Weeness remained indoors throughout this Geneva stay on account of a cold, but I once more found the city a fruitful mine for Reformed literature. The firm of Jullien continued to prove an excellent source for

materials of this nature. On Sunday, April 1st, I joined a large congregation in the Church of St. Pierre for the installation of Henri Babel as one of its pastors.

Paris was the next stop. Like Geneva, it yielded a fine lot of books. The dealer in this city by the Seine, Fischbacher's, had gathered many worthwhile items since my last visit to his establishment.

The sea at the port of Calais was threateningly rough as we went aboard the cross-Channel boat for Dover; but the journey proved more comfortable than would have been anticipated under the circumstances. We returned to the Tavistock Hotel in London, and attended services on the next day at the Crown Court Presbyterian Church. This congregation is located in the center of the theater district and is affiliated with the Church of Scotland.

On Monday we attended the presentation of "My Fair Lady" at the Drury Lane Theatre, just across the street from the entrance to Crown Court Church. The chief entrance to this theatre, in keeping with a consistent but unstudied practice of the British to confuse the unwary visitor to London, is not on Drury Lane but rather on Catherine Street.

As returning patrons of the *Flying Scotsman,* Weeness and I again left for Edinburgh. Here she renewed her friendship with Cathy Reid, but was unable to locate Peggy Blakeley. On Sunday, April 11th, we attended worship at St. Columba's Free Church where a precentor, rather than an organ, led the singing of the congregation.

Edinburgh was soon left behind in the interests of a visit to North Ireland. Here we stayed at the Adair Arms in Ballymena. On Easter Sunday the two of us worshipped at the church in nearby Broughshane where my father and his forefathers had held their membership in bygone years. In the adjoining churchyard, many of my Spence ancestors are buried.

Return to Edinburgh was followed by a journey to London.

After a short stay here, we went to Southampton on the day before sailing on the *Queen Elizabeth*, the largest of all passenger vessels, with a tonnage of 83,673. After locating lodgings for the night, Weeness expressed a desire to visit Stonehenge. We accomplished this by taking a train to Salisbury and a taxi out to the strange and perplexing array of giant stones on the moor north of that city. A drive to the Salisbury Cathedral, a church distinguished by the highest spire in England (405 feet), preceded our return to Southampton.

The *Queen Elizabeth* was immense, having a slightly greater tonnage than its sister *Queen*, although a passenger would be unable to discern any difference in this respect between the two. The voyage from Southampton was not an unpleasant one, although heavy seas prevailed at times during its course.

In company with Weeness's sister, Evelyn Holman, and my nephew, Chenault Spence, Jr., we set out on April 27, 1965, on the *Queen Mary* for Europe, disembarking at Cherbourg on May 3rd. Seven hours' ride across beautiful Normandy brought us to Paris and the Hotel Montpensier, a real find in its field.

The highlight of our Paris stay was a tea, given for us by the United States ambassador to France, Charles E. Bohlen, and Mrs. Bohlen, at their Paris home. Chenault Spence was a friend of the Bohlen family.

Leaving Paris, our party moved to Montpellier in southern France, where Weeness and I attended the celebration of the Lord's Supper in a Reformed church of that city. The communicants all stood during the service, since they considered it disrespectful to be seated during its course.

Unmistakable evidence of Parkinson's Disease came here, as Weeness found it practically impossible to walk, after a stroll through the streets of Montpellier. Fortunately this incapacity proved to be of only a temporary nature.

After leaving Montpellier and spending the night at Nice in the excellent Hotel Trocedero, we took a slow "Express train"

along the coast of the Rivera. After passing through Monte Carlo, Evelyn and Chenault left us at the border city of Ventemiglia in order to make a trip to Florence. It was hard to part with such companions, but the real tragedy lay in their taking all the Italian money in our group's possession, plus the lunch we had purchased in Nice. Fortunately the dining car steward was happy to receive French currency, and we reached Torre Pellice and the Parc Hotel where we were welcomed by our friends, the Michelins. Here Elizabeth secured two Huguenot crosses, one for Maria and one for Liz; since their family lines included the French and Reformed ancestry represented by these emblems.

Our stay in Torre was followed by a night spent at the Hotel Rosetti in Pisa, the name of which was symbolized by lovely red roses growing at its entrance. Then came a visit to the city's Leaning Tower, cathedral, and baptistry—one of the world's most impressive complexes of ecclesiastical structures—with a cemetery beyond whose soil is largely composed of ship loads of earth brought from the Holy Land.

I discovered a large and valuable lot of Waldensian materials in Rome, our next stop. Here Weeness realized a wish to visit the Catacombs before we went aboard the elegant train, the *Setto Bello*, for Milan and the Hotel Espera e Corona.

Weeness, Evelyn, and I set out for Lucerne the following morning. Here we stayed at the Hotel Raben, overlooking the River Reuss soon after it flows from the Lake. Chenault arrived promptly from Rome, bringing a vivid account of the experiences attendant upon a night in the sleeping accommodations of European railways known as couchettes. A day's visit to Zurich paid heavy dividends in the form of Zwingli materials for the Historical Foundation's collections.

Our next stop was Strasbourg where John Calvin had found a wife many years before our arrival, and which today is the seat of the Theological Faculty of the Reformed Church of

On the *Queen Mary*, 1965
Chenault Spence, Jr., Elizabeth,
and Evelyn Holman

Lubbock, 1968

Nursing Home
With Liz, Drake, and Maria Thomas

Alsace and Lorraine. This is a separate organization from that of the Reformed Church of France.

A trip on the Trans Europ Express, the *Edelweiss*, brought us to Amsterdam. This visit was an uneventful, though a profitable one in the number of Dutch publications acquired while in the city.

The crossing of a very rough North Sea led to London and, again, the Imperial Hotel. Here British television took a confusing twist with the announcement that "Monday's Newcomers will be transmitted next week on Tuesday." For the two following days the British Broadcasting Corporation allotted a considerable portion of its time to the presentation of a cricket match between an English and a touring Australian, or was it a New Zealand, team? "He has decided to put the bat more firmly to the ball," and "Vic Pollard has been batting for exactly four hours" were characteristic expressions of the commentator, whose diction was markedly different from that of some of those serving in similar capacities in the United States.

A trip to Belfast and contact with Alexander Stuart, clerk of the session of St. Enoch's Presbyterian Church of that city, led to remunerative connections for the obtaining of materials and a ticket for the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The opening of the Assembly began with the ringing of a small bell and an admonition from some functionary for "Order in the hall."

A visit to Portrush, where we had spent an enjoyable week thirty-eight years earlier, afforded an opportunity for meeting Adam Loughridge, clerk of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Dr. Loughridge is now one of that Church's theological professors, living in Belfast.

Next came Edinburgh and a trip with Weeness and Cathy Reid to Dunfermline over the new Forth road bridge, followed by lunch in the Glen in reflection of earlier days.

It was then to London and Southampton to board the *Caronia*

THE LIBRARY
Union Theological Seminary
RICHMOND VA

for an unusually smooth trip across the Atlantic. The City of New York took unmistakable cognizance of our arrival by staging a taxi strike, but the Cunard Line provided buses for the transportation of incoming passengers to their New York destinations.

One of Weeness's happiest years was 1967, when Maria and her two children, Chuckie and Lizzie, lived next door in Happy Hut. It was surely happiness tempered with unrelenting apprehension, since Charlie was absent in Vietnam at the height of the war in that area. Maria's family moved their own household belongings to Montreat for use in Happy Hut, storing its regular furnishings in the Spence basement. Chuckie attended school in Black Mountain, while Lizzie went to the kindergarden, meeting at the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church. Each night we found it convenient to go next door and frequently read to the two children. *Madeline* was a favorite with Lizzie, while Chuckie reveled in *Faster and Faster.*

Chuckie took full advantage of the proximity of Happy Hut to the home of his Grandmother. He would frequently check the prospective menues of the two places for a given meal, intending to dine at whichever of them gave promise of providing the most succulent delicacies. It is unnecessary to say that the Grandmother in question never frowned upon this practice, in fact, there were few of his actions which ever met with her expressed disapproval, far fewer than was the case with his Mother.

Chuckie and Lizzie prepared an elaborate and colorful "Welcome Home, Daddy" sign for their front door when the family learned that Charlie would soon be back from his overseas assignment; and there was rejoicing, mingled with fervent thanksgiving, when he did arrive shortly before Christmas of 1967.

The marriage of her nephew, William McCoy, at Charlotte, North Carolina, in November of 1967 was a happy occasion for

Weeness and her grandchildren, Chuckie and Lizzie, who were living with their mother at that time in Happy Hut. Going down on the day before the wedding, the younger members of the party, not only found great pleasure in the formal events connected with the wedding, but discovered numerous attractions at the motel where they stayed. Here they entertained themselves by experimenting with the furniture and the doors to their heart's content.

Ems Holman, who had been with us on a European trip in 1956, joined us again as we sailed from New York on August 21, 1968, having taken passage on the *Rotterdam*, a new Dutch ship of modernistic design. This vessel of 38,645 tons made scheduled stops at Southampton and Havre, landing its passengers at Rotterdam on the morning of August 29th.

This time Weeness traveled with a cane and received special attention before, during, and after the voyage. She and I had been taken out of line, by way of preferential treatment but rather to my embarrassment, in contacting the immigration officials even before sailing. "Come on, Grandma," was the exhortation of a steward on shipboard as he helped her up a flight of steps. When she was making her way along the deck, a little Hungarian girl took her by the hand to lead her to a chair. At another time, a man aboard had his wife rise and give Weeness her seat.

A two-day stay at Amsterdam was followed by a day trip by rail up the Rhine. In its course we got an excellent view of the Cologne Cathedral, standing in undesigned tribute to the marksmanship of the allied bombers who carefully avoided hitting this twin-towered church while demolishing the city of Cologne.

After spending Saturday and Sunday nights at the Hotel Chateau Gutsch above Lucerne, we began an overly long, one day trip to Rome. Here, once more, Weeness found herself the object of special attention. One man carefully helped her to

board a bus, and a young girl rose as she entered to offer her seat. While waiting at the Colosseum for a return bus, a woman standing near took particular care to shield my companion from the light rain which had begun to fall.

An overnight journey brought us from Rome to Turin, just in time to be put on the wrong train by a porter—it is as easy to blame someone else for your mistakes in Italy as elsewhere. This error was promptly rectified and we found ourselves in Torre Pellice once more. Here the Michelins welcomed and installed us in their Parc Hotel. By this time we had actually begun to feel at home in this far away place. By previous arrangement we met J. Alberto and Mrs. Soggin of the Faculty of the Waldensian Faculty of Theology at Rome in Torre. Dr. Soggin took us for several motor trips through the surrounding Waldensian Valleys.

We next moved to Geneva through marvelous mountain scenery and took a room at the Regina Hotel, from the balcony of which Mount Blanc was clearly visible. In Geneva Weeness visited the Reformation monument and the Church of St. Pierre for the first time. A ride on the Lake to Noyon and return was a pleasant feature of our stay there.

London was our next destination, and then came Belfast, reached after a night on the *Ulster Queen* in the most luxurious ship's cabin which we ever occupied. We found our friend, Alexander Stuart, ill, but paid him a short visit through the kindness of James Elder, who took us out to the Stuart home in his motor car.

From Belfast we went to Scotland in time to see a beautifully weird eclipse of the moon over Edinburgh Castle, viewed in comfort from the window of our room in the Mount Royal Hotel on Princes Street. While in Edinburgh, Weeness saw Cathy Reid and Peggy Blakeley repeatedly.

The train from Edinburgh to London made the 392 miles between the two cities in 365 minutes. Weeness was quite tired

when we reached the St. James Hotel, but was able to attend services at nearby Westminster Chapel on the following Sunday.

Three days later we went on board the *Queen Elizabeth* at Southampton, the port from which we always sailed for home from Great Britain.

Weeness was regretfully unable to attend the 1969 meeting of the General Assembly which convened in Mobile, Alabama. This Assembly set aside a special time for recognition of my retirement as Director of the Historical Foundation, designated me as Director Emeritus, presented me with a handsome plaque bearing a likeness of the Foundation building in token of my all but thirty years of service with the institution, and announced the naming of this building as Spence Hall. Needless to say, she did join in hearty and grateful appreciation of these esteemed acts of the highest court of our church.

At the Christmas seasons of 1968, 1969, and 1970, we made the trip to Lubbock, Texas, by air in order to spend these holidays with Maria and her family. Between the 1968 and 1969 visits, Drake Spence Thomas came as a new member of the Thomas household, being born on May 2, 1969. His presence added greatly to the festivities at Lubbock of that and the following year. Weeness found these visits thoroughly enjoyable, all despite the fact that she was giving more and more evidence of the effects of her chronic illness.

She was the guest of Tommy and Ann Warren in May of 1970, as I spent two days at Davidson College for the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the graduation of my class. At Thanksgiving of the same year she was in Richmond for a reunion of the Holmans.

About this time the suggestion was made that her portrait be painted. To this proposal she objected sufficiently for the sake of propriety, but not emphatically enough to prevent the carrying out of the plan. Lucie Baxter Dulin of Charlotte was the artist who portrayed her likeness on the treasured canvas

now in my possession. To this we have since added a portrait of Weeness's daughter, Maria, and one of her granddaughter, Lizzie, each of them the work of Mrs. Dulin.

It is difficult to realize that Weeness spent almost all of the last six years of her earthly life, either in a nursing home or in a hospital. From July of 1971 until April of 1977, such was the case.

By the summer of 1971 the inroads of her illness had increased to a point where there was a tendency for her to fall from time to time. In July of that year she became seriously ill, and for fifty days was a patient at Memorial Mission Hospital at Asheville, North Carolina. Here she was under the care of her family physician, Dr. Hubert Clapp, whose efforts, combined with those of the nursing staff of the hospital, enabled her to make substantial recovery from that particular attack.

Following her discharge from Memorial Mission Hospital at the beginning of September, she was transferred to the Monterey Asheville Nursing Inn in the Biltmore section of Asheville, where she was under the care of Mrs. Louis Landolfi and her associates. Here she remained for several years until another critical condition developed in April of 1975, necessitating another period of hospitalization, this time at Aston Park Hospital under the care of Dr. Woodard E. Farmer. Dr. Clapp was out of town at this time. The devoted attention of the nurses at Aston Park, and that of Dr. Farmer, were successful in effectuating her recovery.

Another of those ministering to her during the nursing home days was Dr. James D. Reeves, her dentist. His office was conveniently near the Monterey Asheville Nursing Inn, making it possible for her to be taken there in her wheel chair. He will continue to be remembered for his thoughtfulness and gentleness in the care which he rendered.

In May of 1975 she left the hospital to enter Stroupe's Rest Home, situated on a hill commanding an inspiring view near

Oteen, North Carolina. Here she was cared for until she contracted pneumonia near the end of April of 1976. She again entered Memorial Mission Hospital, once more quite dangerously ill. At the request of Dr. Clapp, Dr. Samuel Crow took charge of her while there, and Dr. Crow's attention and that of the nurses, and the overall blessing of God, led to her recovery from pneumonia.

After her release from the hospital she entered the Nursing Unit of Highland Farms Community, Black Mountain, North Carolina, where she spent between three and four months. By this time she had become practically confined to her bed, no longer able to ride about in her wheel chair.

During the months at Monterey Asheville and at Stroupe's, she spent much of her time during my visits in her chair as I wheeled her along the corridors of these buildings. Fortunately, I had retired from work with the Historical Foundation in June of 1969, and each of the hospitals and nursing homes was within easy reach of Montreat. This enabled me to spend some time every day with her.

While wheeling her around the halls of the buildings I acquired the habit of singing in a low voice, audible only to my patient, various miscellaneous jingles of a nonsensical nature. These seemed to serve as something of a contrast with reality, tending to relieve tension in many instances. Several times Weeness facetiously suggested that I publish them—a thing of which neither of us ever dreamed would be done. But here follow several samples:

This place is very, very nice,
    Quite nice as one can see;
But you, yourself, are nicer far
    Than any place could be,
In fact the very nicest thing
    In all this whole country.

Since you are you and I am I,
Oh would it not be fine,
If I were yours forever more
And you were always mine.

Come, sing a song of anything;
Sing such a song to me,
And should that song displeasing prove,
I'll sing it back to thee.

O, come to me when day is young;
O, Come to me at dawn;
Or else I shall unhappy be
And fearfully forlorn.

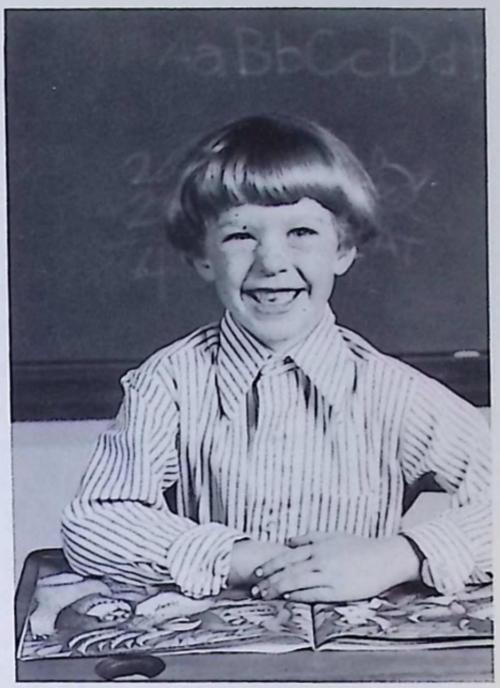
O, come to me at midday tide,
When sun is riding high,
Or otherwise I now propose
To sit me down and cry.

O, come to me when day is done
And when the sun has set—
But if you do not come to me,
I'll go to you, you bet.

For the first years of her nursing home stay, Weeness was able to go for rides through the nearby country, the roads through the town of Biltmore Forest and the Blue Ridge Parkway being favored for this purpose. As earlier noted, through Christmas of 1975 she was sufficiently well to return to her home in Montreat for brief periods—one, two, or in one instance, three days and nights.

While at Monterey she almost always came down in her wheel chair for supper in the large living room and here joined several other patients assembled at the five o'clock hour for

Thomas Hugh Spence III



Mark Henderson Spence

The Charles D. Thomas, Jr., Family
Maria and Charlie
Liz, Drake, and Chuck

their evening meal. Among this number was her Montreat neighbor and devoted friend, Dr. A. A. McLean.

Her fiftieth wedding anniversary came on June 16, 1976, when she was at Highland Farms, but at a time when she was not sufficiently well to enjoy the occasion. There was much to be thankful for, however, the kind and efficient care which she was receiving and the memories of all the golden years since that summer evening which seemed so very long ago.

By this time she was obviously in need of even more nursing attention than had formerly been the case. That of the nurses at Memorial Mission and Aston Park hospitals had undoubtedly served to save and prolong her life. The contribution made by Mrs. Louis Landolfi and her successors at Monterey Asheville, and that of Mrs. Stroupe and her faithful workers were such as to instil in her loved ones an abiding sense of gratitude for their ministrations.

When she came to Chunn's Cove Nursing Home, Mrs. Lucy Bell and those associated with her recognized the necessity of intensified care and evidently banded together to assure that this was forthcoming. During her illness, Weeness's sister Katherine (Mrs. Larry MacKallor) proved herself a passingly diligent letter writer as numerous letters were received by Weeness, frequently every day. The particular treat to which Weeness looked forward while at Stroupe's and Chunn's Cove was ice cream which I served to her each afternoon. She preferred chocolate but welcomed any flavor that might be available.

It was much like a family at the Chunn's Cove Nursing Home, a family which included, not only the patients, but their relatives as well. When I was confined in an Asheville hospital, following an operation in early January of 1977, I received a get well card signed personally by each of the Chunn's Cove nurses. To these and all who helped in her care we will always be grateful for their ministrations to one so dear to us.

By April it was evident that Weeness was growing weaker. Maria, Margaret McCoy, and Larry and Katherine MacKallor arrived in Montreat for daily visits with her.

On Monday, the eighteenth of April, nineteen hundred and seventy-seven, the lengthening shadows of evening, falling across the highland valleys, foretold the close of another mountain day. For her the dark did not come. Before the going down of the sun, she gently passed into that land of light ineffable beyond the tenuous veil shading the redeemed in glory from the eyes of those whose walk is still by faith and not by sight. Locust Bend, Richmond, Banner Elk, Edinburgh, Dunfermline, New York, Hastings, and Montreat, as well as the succeeding nursing home and hospital years, were all behind. She was at home—at home for ever.

Montreat friends concurred in providing all possible assistance to those of her family, while a number from other communities came in to lend the support of their presence. Altogether, such kindly concern was a special blessing to each of those near to her.

Calvin Thielman, her pastor, and Kenneth Foreman, a close family friend, conducted services at ten o'clock on the morning of the following Thursday in Gaither Chapel where she had worshipped until illness deprived her of that coveted privilege. Tom Stierwalt was in his accustomed place at the organ, playing the beloved hymns of the Christian Faith. Barbara Hinkle, accompanied by Audrey Skelton, sang "Rock of Ages" and "The sands of time are sinking; The dawn of heaven breaks."

The great and goodly grove at Rocky River and its environs were at their springtime loveliest at four o'clock on the same afternoon, as her dear ones and friends gathered for a second service, held in the adjacent cemetery. Eugene Boelte, the Rocky River pastor, joined the ministers from Montreat as the three officiated at this time.

The cemetery to the rear of the Church at Rocky River is a place of holy quiet—a quiet perhaps to remain unbroken until that radiant day of utter finality when

> The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout,
> With the voice of the archangel,
> And with the trump of God.

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